The LUTHERAN OUTLOOK

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He Dwelt Among Us

Bishops Yet!

That C. C. Editorial

Christmas Is for Children

Distinctive Characteristics of Lutheran Theology
A. V. Neve

American Lutheran Conference
Report of Commission on Unity
Conference Resolutions on Unity
Division of American Missions

VOL. XIII DECEMBER, 1948 NO. 12

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Pointed Paragraphs

WHO'S WHO

The Rev. A. V. Neve is a pastor of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church at Sleepy Eye, Minnesota. The report of the Commission on Unity of the American Lutheran Conference was written by Dr. E. E. Ryden, editor of the **Lutheran Companion** of the Augustana Lutheran Church.

CONVENTION SIDELIGHTS

The banquet speaker at the convention of the American Lutheran Conference in Detroit was Dr. O. P. Kretzmann, president of Valparaiso University. He told of appearing as a speaker some years ago before a Missouri Synod audience. At that time Dr. Kretzmann was not yet married, and that fact came out in the course of his remarks. Afterward a layman came up to him.

"You say you ain't married?"

"That's right," said Dr. Kretzmann.

"Ain't got no wife ner no kids ner nothin'?"

"No."

"And the Church sends you down to Valparaiso to take care of them hundreds of boys and girls?"

"Yes."

"Huh! Ain't that just the way we do things in the Missouri Synod?"

OFFICERS RE-ELECTED

With one exception the committee on nominations named the present officers of the Conference as candidates for re-election: Dr. L. M. Stavig, president; Rev. John A. Houkum, first vice-president; Dr. Oscar A. Benson, second vice-president; Dr. Norman A. Menter, secretary; Mr. Otto Leonardson, treasurer. In the place of the Rev. Karl J. Wilhelmsen, who asked to be relieved, the Rev. C. Clifford Madsen was named as third vice-president. These men were then elected without opposition.

TRAIN TROUBLE

Dr. Walter Schuette told this one at the convention. Three preachers were telling each other their troubles.

One said, "Every Sunday, just as I get to the climax of my sermon, a freight train comes past on the Pennsylvania behind the church, and for five minutes no one can hear what I am saying."

The second one sympathized with him. "I know how that is. Every Sunday, just when I am in the middle of the long prayer, the New York Central goes screeching past."

The third preacher looked at them sadly. "You fellows have nothing to complain about. Every Sunday in my church, after I get done preaching, right down the middle aisle comes the Nickel Plate."

CONVENTION ITEMS

At the opening communion service President Stavig preached the sermon, and the Rev. W. B. Scarvie delivered the confessional meditation. Dr. E. E. Ryden gave an inspiring "Report from Amsterdam" at the Wednesday evening service. This service was enriched by some beautiful singing by the Detroit Choral Society under the leadership of Mr. Kenneth Jewell. At the banquet Thursday night there was dinner music by the Garbe Ensemble, Dr. O. A. Benson was toastmaster, Mr. Jewell led us in group singing, and Mr. Rudolph Hoeft gave us some lessons in magic, before the speaker of the evening, Dr. Kretzmann, was introduced. Conference appreciated the fine hospitality of Rev. Lange and Faith Congregation. Besides the banquet the ladies of the church served us a fine lunch each day in the church basement.

IN GOOD COMPANY

To understand this one you have to know that your editor has written for his church an explanation of Luther's Small Catechism. Recently (so I heard in Detroit) Rev. Alwin J. Prange gave his junior catechism class a written test in which was the question, "What is the catechism?"

"The catechism," wrote one little girl, "is a book that God helped Dr. Martin Luther write the first part of and Dr. Dell the second part."

LUTHERAN OUTLOOK

Conference action on the **Outlook** was as follows:

1. That the Conference rescind its previous action regarding the Lutheran Outlook, viz., to secure a full-time editor and full-time business manager for this publication.

2. That the Lutheran Outlook be continued on the present basis.

3. That the executive committee be authorized to make the necessary arrangements for securing a part-time editor and a part-time business manager.

4. That the budget committee be asked to place an item on the budget for the next biennium sufficiently large to subsidize the Outlook.

5. That the editor be heartily commended for his excellent work and that if possible he be prevailed upon to continue to serve in his present capacity.

Your editor was surprised to discover in Detroit a number of leading laymen of the Conference who read not so much as heard that we print a magazine. Ain't that just the way we do things in the Lutheran Church?

The Lutheran Outlook

Official Organ of the American Lutheran Conference

REV. J. A. DELL, D.D., Editor

813 Vernon Road, Columbus 9, Ohio

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OFFICERS OF CONFERENCE

President: Rev. Lawrence M. Stavig, D.D., Sioux Falls, S.D.

Secretary: Rev. Norman A. Menter, D.D., Detroit, Mich.

Treasurer: Mr. Otto Leonardson, 2445 Park Ave., Minneapolis 4, Minn.

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The
LUTHERAN OUTLOOK

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EDITORIAL

HE WORD was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.

—o—

e walked upon the earth as its Lord and Master.

he wind howled over Galilee and whipped the waters he sea to raging fury, but He rebuked the wind and waves and they subsided to peaceful serenity at the voice of their Maker. At Cana the water drawn from the well became wine to grace the wedding feast of a friend. The unking fish in the sea gathered at the spot where He ructed His disciples to cast the net. The fig tree hout fruit withered and died at His word of rebuke. der His hands who makes the fertile fields produce food, a few loaves multiplied themselves to feed a ltitude. And when He died upon the cross of shame bright face of the sky drew across itself a pall of ck clouds, and the earth rumbled and shook.

e Dwelt mong Us

Ie walked upon the earth as its Lord and Master, and beheld His glory.

—o—

Ie ministered to the poor and needy.

Ie laid His hands upon the fevered, throbbing brow, l the coolness of evening and of soft winds descended on the sufferer like a benediction from heaven. He ıched the tips of His fingers to sightless eyes, and ht and color and beauty blossomed again for the soul ıt had walked in darkness. To those who were doomed dwell in the lonely silence of the deaf He restored the ınds of music and singing and the laughter of little ildren, and the first sweet sound they heard was the ice of the Word made flesh. The lame man threw ay his crutches and leaped and ran, and the invalid lled up his pallet and carried it away on his back at the ord of the Son of man. The dumb, whose language d been one of signs, shouted aloud for joy and praised s God with a new-found voice when the string of his ngue was loosed. At His command a little girl awoke from the deep and dreamless sleep of death to snuggle again into her mother's arms; a young man turned back from the very gate of the city of the dead to minister again to his widowed mother; and in a shadowed home in Bethany two sisters received a beloved brother from the deeper shadows of the grave when the voice of the living Word penetrated to his departed soul.

He ministered to the poor and needy, and we beheld His glory.

—o—

He opened our eyes to the worth of any human soul.

The little children were dear to Him. He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them. The lowly and undistinguished were His friends, and the common people heard Him gladly. He did not draw His robe about Him in disgust when people of unsavory reputation drew near; on the contrary it was said of Him, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." When a sinful woman was brought before Him, He confounded her accusers and said to the penitent sinner, "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." He was not prejudiced against the people of other races and tongues. It was a woman of another race who received His praise, "O woman, great is thy faith"; and a man of another race of whom He said, "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel." The despised Samaritan He made the hero of one of His great parables, and pointed out that of the ten lepers He healed the one who returned to give thanks was a Samaritan. He could have healed a leper one day with a word, but knowing the hunger of that heart for human companionship, He reached out and touched him. And even as He hung dying on the tree He had time to welcome a sinner into the paradise of God.

He opened our eyes to the worth of any human soul, and we beheld His glory.

—o—

He brought us a warm message from the other world.

He is the One who taught us to turn our eyes to heaven

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and begin our conversation with the eternal and almighty God with the dear and confident words. "Our Father." In the parable of the prodigal son He illustrated the love of that heavenly Father for us rebellious children, and how He welcomes us back to His heart when we come to ourselves. He told us about the mansions in heaven, and said that He was going to prepare a place there for us. He told us a story of a poor beggar who, when he died, was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. He said, "I am the Good Shepherd. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and no man shall pluck them out of my hand." He said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me shall never die." When He left us, He said, "I go unto the Father." But He also said, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

He brought us a warm message from the other world, and we beheld His glory.

—o—

He changed the thinking of men, and made the world a better place to live.

He sent out His Church to carry the message of heaven and a forgiving God to the ends of the earth. Where His servants came, the slavery of man to man began to disappear. Schools were erected where the children of the outcaste were as welcome as the children of the mighty. Hospitals wre built where formerly the sick were left to suffer and die without care, and in those hospitals the healing miracles of the Master were repeated a thousand times. Great printing presses were set to work, printing the Word of God that centers in the Word made flesh, and men devoted their lives to the study of strange tongues that the Word of life might whisper in the ears and sing in the hearts of more and more people. He turned our eyes to heaven and our hearts to eternity. The world has not forgotten Him, and it can never forget.

He changed the thinking of men and made the world a better place to live, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Bishops Yet!

I CAME ACROSS the following item in a report of the convention of the United Lutheran Church:

"General presidents and district presidents of the ULCA may be called archbishops and bishops in the future. Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the ULCA, was asked to appoint a special commission to study the possibility of revising the titles of church officers 'to make them conform more nearly to churchly and historical usage.' Dr. William F. Sunday, pastor of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in New York City, who introduced the resolution, stressed his conviction that 'the Church should be the Church in its use of terminology to describe its functions.' He said he favored use of the title archbishop for the president of the Church, with the presidents of synods to be known as bishops."

I hope this never comes to pass, and I do not think it will. There are no doubt in every Lutheran body in America a few individuals who love pomp and ceremony and titles. They are sometimes afraid that representatives of American Lutheranism will suffer by comparison with the Lutheran leaders of Europe who have many high-sounding titles. So occasionally we hear the suggestion that our synodical presidents should be called bishops too.

But those who make the suggestion entirely misconstrue the spirit of our American Lutheran Church, I am sure. In the first place, we do not want bishops over us; we do not want to be ruled from above. We believe that we are all kings and priests unto God (Rev. 5:10) and a royal priesthood (I Pet. 2:9). We will have no hierarchy with us the power comes from below, from the grass roots, not from above. We elect our leaders (not rule them) and we elect them for a term of years, not for life. Of course, those who suggest that we have bishops will tell us that they do not want our leaders to have episcopal *powers,* but only the *name.* Most Lutherans will answer, "If you don't want them to have the powers, don't saddle them with the name." If a synodical president were called a "bishop" and failed of re-election, what would he be then?

In the second place, we do not believe that our leaders need to have titles to be recognized at their true worth. We have had leaders in world Lutheranism who had the confidence and esteem of Lutherans the world around—Dr. Morehead, Ralph Long, Daniel Nelson, for example—and their respect did not have to rest upon a title; it rested upon a highly honorable and highly honored character. They were men of God, and everyone recognized it. A title will not give anyone that honor nor lack of a title take it away.

In the third place, it is not more "churchly" to call our leaders bishops. (Note that the advocate of the change says, "The Church should be the Church in its use of terminology"). In the New Testament the titles elder, pastor, and bishop are used interchangeably to denominate the office of the spiritual leader of a Christian flock. Note, for instance, I Peter 5:1-4: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ (that is to say, an apostle) . . . feed the flock of God which is among you (they were to be pastors), taking the oversight (episcopacy) thereof, not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd (Pastor) shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Paul also, speaking to the Ephesian *elders,* says: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock (that are shepherds, *pastors)* over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (*bishops)* Acts 20:28. Writing to Timothy he implies that Timothy is a bishop, for he names the qualifications of a bishop and then says, "I write these things unto thee that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God

im. 3:14, 15). And in the next chapter he calls Tim- "a good minister of Jesus Christ." In the second r he exhorts Timothy to "preach the Word . . . do work of an evangelist . . . make full proof of thy stry." The same man is a bishop, a minister, a cher, an evangelist.

ou can see that in those days the titles elder, bishop, ster, pastor were interchangeable. It was only in later development of a hierarchy that "bishop" came ean more than "pastor." The word that is probably l most often in the New Testament to designate the who serves his fellow Christians is the one from ch we get our word "deacon" (diakonos). It means ply "one who serves, a minister." This is the highest of all, for the Son of man Himself came not to be istered unto but to minister. What a contrast to the om in the Church that has developed the hierarchy, re the archbishops are called "princes of the Church"! the apostle Peter says that we are not to be "lords r God's heritage." "Let this mind be in you which also in Christ Jesus . . . who made Himself of no utation."

epeal aft-Hartley Law?

HE ELECTION RETURNS were not yet entirely in when leaders of the triumphant party and of labor anizations began to talk of the election as a mandate the people to repeal the Taft-Hartley law.

Labor leaders take credit for the election of Mr. Tru- n, and will no doubt try to press their advantage to ure legislative favors for themselves. But it is to be ed that the Democratic Congress will not be so shed with victory as to throw caution to the winds.

The Taft-Hartley Act came into existence almost by cessity and with a considerable pressure of public inion behind it. That is shown by the fact that when . Truman vetoed it, Congress passed it over his veto; ich means that a considerable number of Democratic tes were added to those of the Republicans to attain e necessary two-thirds majority. In other words, it was ipartisan act. The representatives of a large majority the people believed the law to be desirable and re- ired.

The reason for that belief should not now be lost sight . The reason was that the labor leaders were using e strike weapon without restraint; even to the extent endangering the health of whole communities, or opardizing the welfare of the nation as a whole. Even r. Truman was so exasperated at one time, you re- ember, that he asked Congress for the authority to aft striking railroad workers into the army.

The Taft-Hartley law does not deprive workers of the ght to strike. It does aim to restrain labor leaders from lling strikes against the peace and safety of the com- unity, and to make labor unions and their leaders re- onsible for their actions. The act may need revision ere and there—in fact the Congress that enacted it also set up a special commission to study its working with a view to revising it where and when necessary. But the principles it embodies, those of making labor leaders responsible before the law and of denying labor the right to endanger the community as a whole, should be retained in any new labor code that takes the place of the Taft-Hartley law.

That C. C. Editorial

I MEAN the editorial in the *Christian Century* of October 27, entitled "Need Lutherans Be Skeptics?" which is reprinted in the news columns of this issue.

The editorial is noteworthy for more than one reason. It is noteworthy on the one hand as the only example I can remember of a non-Lutheran discussing Lutheran Church affairs, and getting all his facts straight regarding the organizations and relations of Lutheran bodies in this country. This is in itself a minor miracle; I had thought that no one but a Lutheran would ever have them straight in his mind. It is evident that this writer has been studying Lutheran organization intensively.

But it is noteworthy in another way, too; namely, that in an editorial in which Lutherans are reproved for being skeptical the writer himself shows so much skepticism regarding possibilities of Lutheran union. He speaks of Lutherans preserving "an outmoded spiritual isolationism through the use of ecclesiastical double talk." He speaks of "Lutherans skeptical of all talk of unity among themselves." He says, "It is typical of Lutheran skepticism that many now regard that United Lutheran offer as having been less a bid for unity than a move to prevent the organization of a third force denomination which would leave it out."

Thus the writer displays both a remarkable knowledge of the Lutheran organizational set-up, and a remarkable ignorance of the spirit of Lutheranism. He says, for example, "There are now in this country 16 denominations which take the name or accept the traditions of Luther." Now no Lutheran would speak of the various Lutheran groups as being so many "denominations". We are conscious, all of us, of being one denomination with one common heritage, and we are aware of the fact that we have much more in common with one another than we have with any other Christian Church. The causes of our being apart were in many cases mere accidents of different origin in separate lands of Europe. Of course a denomination like the Disciples of Christ which sprang from one country only and never spoke more than one language (in this country) cannot understand the differences of language and of transplanted homeland cultures that we Lutherans grew up with. Those differences have now been largely outgrown, and the time for forgetting them altogether is drawing near.

Furthermore, it is extremely skeptical to hint that Lutherans are determined to preserve an outmoded isolationism "through the use of ecclesiastical double talk." I am not saying that we do not have ecclesiastical politi-

cians in the Lutheran Church. But I am saying that there is much more in the proposals for unity and union among Lutherans than mere political maneuvering. Anyone who thinks so utterly misunderstands the genuine spirit of humility and sincerity with which Lutherans are approaching each other today. Lutherans need not be skeptics.

What Now Mr. Gallup?

THE NEWSPAPERS, the commentators, the poll-takers, and the experts all had us convinced that the presidential election would be a landslide for Mr. Dewey. First there was the "draft Eisenhower" panic in Mr. Truman's party. Then there was the secession of the States' rights Democrats and the splitting of the solid South. Then there were the inroads which a third party would undoubtedly make in the Trum support. Then in the midst of the campaign there v the unbelievable *faux pas* by Mr. Truman of announc that he was going to by-pass the State Department a the United Nations by sending Mr. Vinson direct Moscow. All signs pointed the same direction—the el tion would be a Dewey walkover. But President Trum won, and both houses of Congress have a Democra majority.

Now what becomes of the accuracy of the polls t we have been relying on? Remember the *Litera Digest*? It boasted for years of the accuracy of its p election polls. Then it missed the boat completely Landon in 1936, and that was the end of the *Litera Digest*. To say the least, there is a shadow hanging ov the prognosticators and poll-takers. The American p ple will henceforth take them with a grain or two of s

Christmas Is for Children

(CHRISTMAS SERMON)

Text: Luke 2:10-16

IF YOU are old in heart, this is not for you. Christmas is for children. If you are too sophisticated to believe in simple things; if you are too worldly-wise to believe in heaven and angels; if you are too cynical to believe in the possibility of the redemption of a lost race; if you are too skeptical to believe in the reality and the love of God—the Christmas story is not for you.

CHRISTMAS IS FOR CHILDREN

I. *Who can see God's angels beyond the stars.*

1. We find it increasingly difficult in our scientific age.

There is a new telescope on Mt. Palomar in California. Those who are interested in such things have been watching the preparation of that giant 200-inch reflector for over ten years. It will extend man's eyesight farther out into space than it has ever reached before. It will bring distant stars and galaxies closer. I have even read articles in which the somewhat nonsensical statement was made that the new telescope may reveal whether the universe is finite or not. It may easily bring new worlds into view. But it will discover no angels. Angels are not seen with that kind of an eye.

I have read, too, of new microscopes in prospect which will excel the electron microscope in power as the latter excelled the old light-wave microscope. These new instruments will take us deeper into the wonders of the microcosm. But they will reveal no angels.

There is a tendency in our world today to suppose that what we cannot see does not exist. There is a tendency to point out that all the supernatural wonders to place a long time ago; to suggest, "That was an uncriti age," and to add, "Miracles do not happen today."

Thus doubt creeps in, and where doubt enters t angels of God begin to disappear. Even among religio people this can happen. A Christian learns that a certa verse in the Bible is a "disputed" passage; that is, it not found in the oldest manuscripts, and is supposed some to be an interpolation by some later coypist or co mentator. But if one passage is of doubtful value, w not others? The end of that course is a loss of reveren for the entire Word of God.

Or perhaps the Christian begins to doubt the existen of a personal, malignant spirit called Satan or the dev From this point it is but a step to the denial of the e istence of any evil spirits at all. The end of that cour is the doubt of the existence of any kind of spirits; a the universe becomes a vast expanse of dead material cold and empty space—and the angels are gone from t sky!

2. But all the while heaven is waiting to bre through to the wondering eye.

Thank God for those "uncritical" shepherds who cou see God's angels! Maybe that is why those angels can when they did; maybe that is partially the reason w that was "the fullness of time." Maybe if God had wa ed much longer the world would have become so scie tific that there would not have been anyone childli enough to see those angels.

You know how it would be if the angels came dow on Broadway today. The first persons to notice the

uld probably think it was some new racket, and would ge by with their hands on their pocketbooks. Those o did not think it was a racket might suppose that it s some advertising stunt, and they would hurry on out their business shaking their heads and muttering, What won't they think of next?"

We have lost the capacity for wonder.

How foolish it is to suppose that what we cannot see es not exist! Can you see God, or soul, or faith, or e, or hope, or joy, or peace, or patriotism, or honor? e scientist has not yet seen the atom, but he will draw u a picture of one, indicating the orbits of the electrons ing around the central nucleus. How does he know, he has never seen it? He knows because he has cer- in indisputable evidence that matter must be so con- tuted in its ultimate form. Even so the believing heart s indisputable evidence for the existence of God and s angels. Faith is the evidence of things not seen.

None of you has ever seen me. You have seen the use I live in, but you have not seen me, the complex thought and feeling and will that constitutes my per- nality and distinguishes me from you. But of the istence of my soul you are sure, as I am sure of the istence of yours.

There is a whole spiritual world pressing in on us from very side. But we are too smart. Like a turtle pulling s head into its shell, we pull back into the narrow con- nes of that which we can understand and weigh and easure, and deny the existence of all else.

But the child-heart can wonder and see, the child- eart that has not become too wise, too learned, too so- histicated. That is why Jesus said, "Except ye become s little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom." he poet Wordsworth has a stanza that begins, "Heaven es about us in our infancy." Yes, and heaven lies all bout us in our adulthood, too, if we do not pull the eil of skepticism over our eyes and say, "I cannot see."

Christmas is for children—

I. *Who can hear God's voice above the outcry.*

1. There is so much noise in the world today.

Sometimes one is tempted to think that the sense of earing is not an unmixed blessing. I am sure, though, hat it was intended to be a blessing. Think of the leasant sounds Adam must have heard in the quiet nd beautiful garden where God placed him: the sigh f the wind in the trees, the tinkle of the brook hurrying ver stones, the song of the birds. I should have liked o see the look on Adam's face when he first heard the ong of a wood thrush, or on Eve's when she first heard he chuckle of a babe in her arms. And of course the ost beautiful sound of all was the sound of the voice f God when He walked with Adam in the cool of the vening.

But the time came when man lost the sound of the oice of God. Man sinned and fled in shame and terror rom the voice of God. And since then we have been lling our world with more and more discordant noises; e have been building a wall of noise around ourselves to crowd out the voice of God. Are we afraid of what it might say to us?

We discovered steel and the wheel, and with them the possibility of all kinds of machinery, machines that clatter and grind and roar and shriek. We built steam engines and saw mills and boiler factories and pneumatic hammers. We filled the roads with roaring trucks and the air with planes that zoomed overhead with a sound as of the very firmament being rent in twain—as indeed it was. In the midst of so many noises we created other noises as warning sounds, the bell, the horn, the whistle, the siren. And through all these noises, punctuating them and spurring them on, was the insistent clang of the cash register.

We also began tinkering with the elements of our world in diabolical experiments until we invented gunpowder and dynamite and TNT, and finally learned how to tear the very atom apart with a searing light and a sound like the crack of doom.

We discovered how to record and reproduce and amplify the voice of man. We discovered the value of propaganda, so that the printing presses roared louder and the radios blared shriller, and the voices of the propagandists—political propagandists, religious propagandists, economic propagandists—rose higher and higher, senators and congressmen, diplomats and delegates of various nations and propagandists of different viewpoints trying to shout each other down, the whole bedlam rising in a fierce crescendo, interspersed here and there with the explosion of bombs—until one can well understand God crying out to His people back there in the Old Testament: "BE STILL! —Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth."

2. And all the while the voice of God is trying to get through this wall of noise to our consciousness.

What if a beloved explorer were lost—what if Admiral Byrd on that last trip to Little America had disappeared in the silent Antarctic regions and no word had been received from him for weeks; and then faint radio messages were picked up? How silent the world would be, listening! Or what if some great scientist, operating a delicate listening device, were to pick up sounds at certain seasons that appeared to him as though they might be faint signals from another world? How the earth would go on tiptoe, so to speak, shutting off all machinery that might cause interference with that signal!

Well, there is another world calling us. Listen, world! God is trying to get through. Shut off those other sounds so we can hear. Stop the rumbling presses. Turn off the radio programs at their source. Halt your roaring trucks and trains and planes. Close up the cash registers for a little while.

Listen!—Bethlehem speaking—and the deep velvet stillness of the night is broken by the thin cry of a newborn child.

And then, suddenly, the whole heaven is alight with the glory of God, and the firmament rings with angelic song: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace.

The children can hear it—the children whose ears have not been deadened by the roar of machinery and beguiled by the song of the cash register and deafened by the shout of propaganda.

Christmas is for children—

III. *Who can find God's Christ in a manger.*

1. Oh, what an unpretentious entrance into the world!

Such a little town—the prophet had pointed that out long before. "And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel."

And such a lowly mother—a mother who said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior; for He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden."

And such a humble place—a stable where the cattle were sheltered from the weather; the warmth of their bodies taking the chill from the winter night, and the sweet smell of hay bringing a touch of summer into the dusky room.

There was no fanfare of silver trumpets from the battlements of Herod's palace announcing the birth of a kingly heir. And over there in Caesar's Rome they had probably never heard of Bethlehem. There were no royal robes prepared for the child. No, He made Himself of no reputation. He borrowed His bed from the cattle. He never owned a home. He never had a bank account. He never went tearing across the country at sixty or seventy miles an hour. I don't suppose He ever moved faster than four miles an hour in His life, unless there was a fair breeze blowing the fishermen home across Lake Galilee sometimes when He was with them.

He had time, though, for important things: time to stop by the wayside and admire the lilies of the field; time to comfort the sorrowing and to strengthen the weak; time to heal the sick and raise the dead and preach the Gospel of the grace of God. And then He died on a cross, despised and rejected of men, at an age when most young men are just getting started in life. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

2. But unpretentious as the birth in Bethlehem was, it was God's way.

And some saw in Him the Christ of God. The shepherds came and knelt at the manger. The wise men brought their gifts. Simeon thanked God for the Babe he was permitted to hold in his arms.

And when the child became a man there were some who knew with the unshaken certainty of faith that here was the One in whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen; and they told the world what they had seen and heard. And now Herod is gone, and Pilate is gone, and Caesar is gone—and perhaps we would never have heard of them if they had not lived just at the time when the Son of man walked the earth. They are gone, and nothing is left of them worth remembering except a plaintive question that Pilate asked one morning when the mob chose Barabbas: "What shall I do then with Jesus?"

Aye, what shall I do with Jesus? For He has risen to fill the whole horizon of the thinking world. He came unto His own and His own received Him not; but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God. Brethren, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Children of God, and if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ! This is the promise that belongs to the childlike heart.

Is it yours? Do you kneel in spirit at the manger in wondering adoration and holy joy? Do you say, with the words trembling a little on your lips, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"?

If you do, blessed are you; for you have the childlike heart. And Christmas is for children. Christmas is for the children—of God. Amen. D.

Legend of the Door

"Why are you come all lonely? Was there none
Wayworn or lost that moved you by his plight
To beckon and put your arm around and lead
Up to the light?
"Go down, go backward down to the deep dark
And labor in love and climb the road once more;
But if again you uncompanioned come,
Barred be the door!"

G. J. Neumann.

Distinctive Characteristics of American Lutheran and Scandinavian Lutheran Theology

A. V. NEVE

THESE REMARKS on distinctive characteristics of American Lutheran and Scandinavian Lutheran theology are in the nature of observations and reflections. Therefore judge them for what they are worth. I am not speaking with finality on problems of theology. I cannot see how anyone dares to speak with finality on any theological problem. Theology is not an exact science. Theology is the study about God and His relationship to man. There always have been, are now, and always will be unsolved problems in theology. God has ordained it that way for a purpose. The finite mind cannot fully comprehend the infinite God. The Church would die a slow death of stagnation if there were no unsolved problems of theology.

Spiritual life is the highest form of life. And there is always a close connection between the theology and the life in the Church. Life is progress. If theology is to serve the Church, it must be progressive. There must be thought development in theology. There are warning signals in history that when theology becomes stagnant, the life in the Church also becomes stagnant. The Lutheran Church of America would do well to heed those warning signals. True progress in theology on the basis of the Word of God is not liberalism. The Lutheran Church cannot live alone on the theology of the 16th century. She tried that once, but it almost quenched the life of the Church. A new thought in theology is not heresy because it is new. There is great thought development in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Both Paul and Christ were accused of false doctrine because they presented new teaching. The same has been repeated down through history, Savanarola, John Huss, Martin Luther, and others.

Let me present the basis for my theological thinking. I accept without reservations the Evangelical principle that the inspired and infallible Word of God is the highest authority in spiritual matters. The Word of God is the infallible rule for faith, doctrine, and practice.

But does the acceptance of this fundamental principle solve all theological problems? No, it does just the opposite. It raises a multitude of unsolved problems. The Bible is a peculiar book. It solves problems, but it also presents unsolved problems which we must wrestle with. And fortunate are the seminary students who have instructors that will point out to the students those unsolved problems.

I often feel that the statement that the Word of God is highest authority in the Church is used like a shibboleth for platform effect. If you can recite the statement with unction, then you may pass over the line of demarcation to safety. If not, then you must stay on the other side.

It would be a great relief if we had a code of doctrine to which to turn for solution of every theological problem. Some use the Book of Concord in that way. In his dogmatics Jacob uses that method to a great extent. The Book of Concord contains much valuable theology, but it does not solve all our present day problems of theology. Each generation must wrestle with its own problems and do its own thinking. And thought development on the basis of the Word of God is not liberalism, as some are so ready to call it.

Some will try to save the situation by saying that Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture. This statement has also become a shibboleth in dilemmas. This principle is good if we know how to use it. Mormons, Russellites, and other sects can quote Scripture effectively to counter our views when we try to substantiate them with Scripture passages.

Too often when we quote Scripture passages, it is interpretation against interpretation. In the last analysis, it is human reason against human reason. We need a fulness of the Spirit in order to divide the Word of God correctly.

I also accept without reservations the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. But does this acceptance solve all the theological problems of the Lutheran Church? They are silent on the baffling problem of inspiration. The Confessions like the Scriptures are subject to different interpretations. And who is to decide whose interpretations are correct? Each one likes to believe that his interpretation is correct, and that the one who differs with him is wrong.

The Confessions do not settle all problems of theology. And Luther in his writings does not settle all theological problems of the Lutheran Church. He would rise and protest against the thought that he had spoken with finality on every problem that ever would arise in the Church.

A. *American Lutheran Theology*

Let us now discuss some distinctive characteristics of American Lutheran theology. Let us begin by asking if

there is a distinct American Lutheran theology in the sense that we talk about Danish Lutheran theology, German Lutheran theology, Swedish Lutheran theology, etc. According to my evaluation, I would be compelled to answer in the negative. That which is called American Lutheran theology is a recopy of European Lutheran theology drawn chiefly from the Reformation and post-Reformation periods. It is many years behind the times in thought development. Take the books on dogmatics by Krauth, Jacobs, Voight, Lindberg, and Stump. They contain sound and solid theology, but there is practically no thought development in these books. Each one is almost a reaffirmation of the previous one. Having read one you have read all.

Here is the reason why seminary instructors lean heavily on recent Europeon theologians. They find in their works development in theological thinking. Some seminary students may not fully understand why their instructors lean heavily on European theologians; and they may call them liberals for doing so. What else can seminary instructors do, because the Lutheran Church of America has not produced any outstanding theologians who have wrestled with modern theological problems?

American Lutheran theology is ultra-conservative. And there is a natural reason why it has developed along ultra-conservative lines.

Let us first take a good square look at our own Synod, The United Evangelical Lutheran Church. In doing so, we must mention Dr. P. S. Vig who has influenced the theological thinking of our Synod to such an extent that we can talk about a Vig school of theology on a minor scale. Dr. Vig was a big theologian and a good teacher. And I am proud of the fact that he was my instructor in theology. But Dr. Vig, like other great men, had some pronounced weaknesses. And followers of great men often imitate their weaknesses more than their greatness. According to my way of thinking, Dr. Vig's greatest fault was his attempt to regiment the thinking of his pupils, and to a great extent he succeded in doing so. And we are suffering from that today in our Synod. It is never good for the Church to have theological thinking stifled.

But let us be generous in our judgment of dear Dr. Vig. He was a man of strong convictions. And it is always refreshing to meet a man who is sincere in his convictions, right or wrong. Dr. Vig presented his views with conviction.

Vig became ultra-conservative due to circumstances. He was reared in Grundtvigian circles in Denmark where the authority of the Word of God was ridiculed. Coming to America as a fiery young pastor, when the controversy between the Grundtvigians and the conservative Danish Lutherans was raging with fury, Vig passed through a crisis. By personal study of the Word of God and Luther's writings Vig saw the untenable position of the Grundtvigians and came over into the conservative camp. Due to his ability Vig became the leader of the conservatives in the Danish Lutheran Church.

Dr. Vig was a good balance wheel in our Synod in h lifetime. At times there were elements in our Synod th had a tendency to go to extremes. Dr. Vig kept them check. I also recall with amusement, how Dr. Vig wou quietly walk into the college chapel when the studen had testimony meetings. When a student was ferver in the spirit, or should I say unfervent, he would imm diately cool down, if not sit down when he saw Vig the rear of the chapel pulling his beard with his hand

I believe that it would be correct to say that Dr. V due to circumstances and due to his natural conserv tive bent of mind was driven into an ultra-conservativ theological position.

There is also a natural reason why the Evangelic Lutheran Church is ultra conservative. Since the da of Hans Nielsen Hauge, Norway has produced powerf evangelists. And that movement was transplanted America. By the impact of the revivalists the moveme in America went to extremes. The reaction to this w the Norwegian Synod (Den Norske Synode). As I see it is the theological thinking of the Norwegian Syno that prevails now in the Evangelical Lutheran Churc There was a long and bitter struggle between the pietis and the conservatives among the Norwegians before the found a common basis for merger.

There was also a long and bitter struggle between th pietists and the conservatives in the synods that now co stitute the United Lutheran Church before they found common basis for merger. Is is the theological thinking Krauth, Jacobs, and Weidner that prevails now in th United Lutheran Church. The English language b came the chief language in the Synods of the U. L. earlier than in the German and Scandinavian Luthera Churches. They were thus influenced more by the r vivalism of the Reformed Churches than were the Ge man and Scandinavian Lutheran Churches. This infl ence of the Reformed revivalists made the conservativ still more conservative.

Lehmann and Loy of the former Ohio Synod and Re of the former Iowa Synod have left their unmistakab marks on the American Lutheran Church. They we big men with magnetic personalities who influenced the Synods to a great extent. The pioneer pastors of tho two Synods, like the pioneer pastors of the other Germa Lutheran Synods, saw the bad effects of the attempt merge the Reformed and Lutheran Churches of German This attempt and the Reformed tendencies of certa Lutherans in America drove them into the ultra-conserv tive camp.

The Augustana Synod has not experienced divisio and mergers like the other Lutheran bodies in Americ Is has preserved a balance between the pietists and co servatives. I think that this balance is due to the fa that its leaders and seminary faculty have had clo contact with trends in theology in Sweden.

The Missouri Synod has exerted a greater influence American Lutheran theology than any other Syno There is spiritual power in the Missouri Synod. Fro

nall beginning she has grown to be the second larg- Lutheran body in America. It is incorrect to say that only thing she has is cut and dried theology. The life church is manifested in its devotional literature. The souri Synod has produced a better type of devotional rature than any other Synod in America. Her strength been her healthy type of spiritual life combined with zeal for purity of doctrine. In this respect she has n watchman on the walls of Zion. Her zeal for purity doctrine has had a salutary influence on the other heran bodies in America.

n order to understand the Missouri Synod, we must ow its founder, Dr. Walther. Walther had a brilliant versity career in Germany. But he was swept off his t by the spirit that prevailed in the universities in rmany where human reason was enthroned. But man reason could not solve one problem for the bril- t Walther, how to find peace for his awakened soul ich was longing for God. In his awakened state of nd Walther came into contact with an extreme emo- nal type of Christianity. But this type of life did not e his restless soul that rest that he was longing for. is peace he found in his private study of the Word of d and in Luther's writings. Coming to America as a ung pastor when extreme revivalism was sweeping the untry, Walther took his definite stand for conservative utheranism arrived at through convictions. Walther's pe of life is clearly manifested in his book: The Right stinction Between the Law and the Gospel. Walther mained a sound pietist on a conservative basis. If we aluate the Missouri Synod correctly we will find those o elements in that Synod today.

But I believe it is a just criticism when we say that e Missouri Synod has closed her doors and windows o tight to trends in European theology. She has built r retaining walls too high. All the Lutheran bodies of merica are more or less guilty of doing the same. The ugustana Synod has done it less than the others.

In this connection we should also take into consider- ion that the Lutheran Church of America has been rrounded by Reformed Churches which have been ry aggressive and some of them had liberal tendencies. his caused the Lutheran Church to become ultra-con- rvative. Here again circumstances forced the Lutheran hurch into an ultra-conservative position. This was a ay of guarding herself against the emotionalism of the eformed Churches which were making inroads among utherans. When two forces clash in the Church both des generally go to extremes.

We can also mention another factor which made the utheran Church of America ultra-conservative. All he Lutheran bodies of America began as foreign lan- uage churches. This naturally made them seclusive, nd it has taken many years to realize that it is not good or them to live in isolation. Each Synod crawled into s own small shell and built high retaining walls to eep all others out. And we are still carrying stones to uild the retaining wall higher.

But there are signs that the different Synods are be- ginning to crawl out of their shells of isolation. Their horizons are being widened and the influence from with- out is being felt. A new generation is growing up. But some are sceptical about the trends and raise the cry of liberalism. I ask in all sincerity: Is it liberalism, or is it the old school that does not understand the new school? We know from church history that views that once were condemned as heresy were later accepted by the Church as orthodox theology. Truth did not change, as truth never does, but man changed his opinion about truth.

Why has the Lutheran Church of America not pro- duced big theologians around whom have flourished schools of theology as they are called in Europe? There are several reasons. 1) The Lutheran Church of Amer- ica is a comparatively young Church. We have been so busy expanding that we have not had time nor means to build higher institutions of learning. And old tradi- tions are also factors. 2) The Lutheran Church of Amer- ica has been divided to its own hurt. We have scattered our strength and resources. 3) In America the practical phase of church life has been emphasized at the expense of scholarship. Young men are not encouraged to do re- search work in graduate schools of theology. As a mat- ter of fact there is no Lutheran graduate school of the- ology in America. 4) But the greatest hindrance is due to regimentation. In America an instructor of theology is not free to do independent and original thinking and present views that are contrary to the accepted views of the Church. If he does he will be shelved, or compelled to close his mouth. We stifle theological thought de- velopment by the method that prevails in our seminaries.

The Church must always be on guard against liberal- ism. But in doing so, she should also be on guard that she does not go so far to the right that she gets into pseudo-Lutheranism. The Lutheran Church which is the Church of the Word, can steer clear of both extremes when she remains true to her precious heritage of the inspired and infallible Word which reveals the living Christ. But she must be on guard that she does not confuse issues and substitute theories about the Word of God for the Word itself. When she does that, then she denies the fundamental principle of her founder, Martin Luther. The Church that stands four-square on the in- spired and infallible Word of God will never become a liberal Church. She will be a progressive, forward- looking Church, also in theological thinking. Where there is life, there will also be progress.

Will American Lutheran theology continue to be ultra- conservative? Let me ask the question: Would it be a good thing for the American Lutheran Church to re- main ultra-conservative? Does it not strangle spiritual life to have it placed in a mold made by man? Our greatest danger is stagnation due to cold and lifeless orthodoxy. The Lutheran Church has always been on guard against infiltration of liberalism. It is her strength that she is conservative. But the Lutheran Church has at times confused issues by making it appear that the struggle for purity of doctrine was a clash between con- servative Lutheranism and liberalism. Sometimes the

clash between conservative Lutheranism and liberalism was a clash between true Lutheranism and pseudo-Lutheranism. Men like Madsen, Skovgaard-Petersen, Henrick Scharling, Geismar, Hallesby, and Søderblom of Scandinavia clarified the issues by showing that much of what is called conservative Lutheranism is pseudo-Lutheranism. These men did some keen thinking. They proceeded in their research on the assumption that the last word in theology was not written in the 16th century.

Some Synods in America have written into their constitutions the clause: "The Bible is the Word of God." I ask in all sincerity: Is that true Lutheranism, or is it pseudo-Lutheranism? The issue is confused when that statement is made the criterion for judging liberalism. That was not the criterion used by Luther in judging false teaching in the Church. The living Christ who is revealed through the Scriptures is the criterion presented by Luther in the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism. Any person's Lutheranism should be tested by the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism. These two instruments have been a protection for the Lutheran Church for over 400 years.

B. *Scandinavian Theology*

When we try to evaluate the theology of the Scandinavian countries, then a number of factors must be taken into consideration. Theology is affected by the geographical location of a country, the political, social, and economic movements within the country. The Church is not an isolated institution unaffected by the various movements.

And we must also take into consideration the history of the Lutheran Church in Scandinavia. The Lutheran Church of America has a comparatively short history. Until now its traditions and customs have been chiefly European. There is not, as yet, a typical American Lutheran Church. The daughter is to a great extent relying upon her mother in Europe.

Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are three small nations wedged in between Germany and England. The theology of Germany and England has influenced the theology of the Scandinavian countries. This does not mean that the Scandinavian countries are dependent on Germany and England for their theology. With the natural independent natures of the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes, the churches of these three countries are strong independent churches with distinctive characteristics

We cannot evaluate the theology of Scandinavia correctly without first evaluating the theology of Germany which has greatly influenced the theology of Scandinavia. By nature the Germans are methodical and systematic. When a German analyzes a thing, he does it thoroughly. It can be said about German scholars that they think a matter through. Germany has produced some big theologians. When men in Scandinavia wished to do graduate study of theology, they went to Germany to study. A degree from a German university meant a high scholastic attainment.

The theology of Germany can be divided into tw schools of theology, the orthodox and the liberal schoo of theology. According to my way of thinking bot schools have gone to extremes. And this is due to th natural inclination of the Germans to be thorough.

The German orthodox school of theology has grea reverence for the authority of the Word of God, and thi is commendable. It emphasizes the objective phase o the Christian faith. This precious heritage has bee transplanted to American soil in the Missouri Syno and the American Lutheran Church. It is to the cred of our German Lutheran brethren that they are zealou in preserving the purity of doctrine.

But I believe that it can truthfully be said, when a objective analysis is made, that the German orthodo school of theology emphasizes the objective phase of th Christian faith at the expense of the subjective phase o the Christian faith. Is this not the cause of the apparen misunderstanding that at times exists between the Lu therans of German extraction and Lutherans of Scan dinavian extraction?

As I see it, Luther has a good balance between th objective and the subjective phases of the Christian fait in his Small Catechism. For a healthy and harmonio spiritual life, we must have both Christ for us an Christ in us.

The liberal school of theology in Germany has gon too far to the left. Liberalism always goes too far to th left. But that is no reason why, as a counter movemen the conservatives should go so far to the right that the get into pseudo-Lutheranism as they sometimes hav done. The conservative Lutherans in America are i danger of doing that.

Let us now go on a journey through Norway, Swede and Denmark and see if we Americans can learn any thing from the theologians of those countries. Scandi avia has produced some big theologians who have i fluenced the church life to very great extent. Theolog and the life of the Church go hand in hand. Do th theologians make the Church, or does the Church mak the theologians?

Norway has produced some powerful evangelists, bu few big theologians. Hans Nielsen Hauge ranks high among the big evangelists of Norway. He was used b God to revive the Church of Norway. And Hauge's in fluence spread to both Denmark and Sweden. His in fluence has also been a factor in the Scandinavian Lu theran Churches of America in keeping alive the tru pietistic spirit.

Due to Hauge the lay people of Norway have take an active part in all branches of church work. Th Church of Norway is truly a people's Church. The Nor wegians have put into practice the clause of the Thir Article: "I believe in the communion of saints." Th Norwegians have emphasized the subjective phase of th Christian faith. Due to this emphasis the Church o Norway has saturated all walks of life more than ha been the case in Denmark.

That the spiritual life of Norway has not become sec

an is due to the fact that the Church has emphasized importance of the Word of God as interpreted by her's Small Catechism. Pontoppidan, who came from nmark to become bishop of Bergen was an important tor by his Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism. e theologians Caspari, a Jew who came to Norway m Germany, and Gisle Johnson were factors for good h their conservative theology. In later years Dr. Halby has done much to give balance to the spiritual life Norway. As I see it, the theological faculty of Norway been in closer contact and taken more part in church ivities than has been the case in Denmark.

When we try to evaluate the theology of Sweden, then elieve that it can truthfully be said that Archbishop derblom has put Sweden foremost among the Scanavian countries as far as creative theology is conned. Søderblom was a big man who excelled in sevl fields, theology, philosophy, science, psychology, tory, and comparative religion. Sweden has reason be proud of her illustrious son. But to me he was atest when I consider his humble faith in the grace God.

Due to his greatness in several fields, Søderblom has en been misunderstood. He was many years ahead of e times in which he lived. He has been greatly criti- ed for his book: "Gudstroens Opkomst." The title is sleading. He does not try to prove, as some say, that e Christian faith has evolved from the ethnic religions. the book he wants to show that the idea of God runs rough every heathen religion, a remnant of the lost radise. L. P. Larsen shows the same in his book: lisk Aandsliv.

Søderblom did much to break down the unnatural rrier that had been erected between Christianity and ence. He showed that there is no conflict between ripture correctly interpreted and science correctly ght. Truth is never in conflict with truth.

The men of the Lund school of theology have produced mething that cannot be ignored. They have done some cellent research work. Aulen's book on atonement, ristus Victor, should be read by every pastor and minary student. It will make you do some rethinking atonement.

Søderblom and the men of the Lund school of theology ve made the theologians of the Reformed Churches udy Lutheran theology as they have never done before. nd they are helping to draw the Lutheran Church out isolation. Søderblom's book, Christian Fellowship, ould be read by every pastor and seminary student.

As a general statement, I believe it can be said that Swedish theology there is a happy combination of holastic attainment, sound doctrine, and true Lutheran ety. The Swedes are by nature a pious people, and ey love harmony. These two characteristics we find their church services. The Swedes have taught us to ve order in the House of God.

When I try to evaluate Danish Lutheran theology, it ay be colored by my Danish blood, but it was not my ult that my parents were born in Denmark. Shakespeare may be right when he says that there is something rotten in Denmark, but no one can say that everything is rotten in Denmark.

I do not apologize for my Danish blood when I consider that little Denmark has produced men like Martensen, Kierkegaard, Madsen, Scharling, Geismar, Plum, Skat - Rørdam, Skat - Petersen, Skovgaard - Petersen, Grundtvig, Kinge, and Brorsen.

Martensen, Madsen, Kierkegaard, and Skovgaard-Petersen have exerted a great influence on the Lutheran Church beyond the borders of Denmark. And today Kierkegaard's name is mentioned in the halls of learning everywhere. People listen to Kierkegaard's voice. The little Dane has a message for our superficial age.

Madsen's dogmatics should be translated into English. Madsen has rightfully been called a prince among dogmaticians. It should be a challenge to our Synod to have his dogmatics translated into English.

What are the distinctive characteristics of Danish theology? As I see it, Danish theology has three distinctive characteristics. 1) Clarity of thought. Danish theology distinguishes clearly between essentials and non-essentials. This is Kierkegaard's influence on Danish theology. Dr. Peder Madsen and Dr. Eduard Geismar apply this rule in their theological writings. 2) Danish theology is progressive. Danish theologians proceed on the assumption that the last word in theology was not written in the 16th century. In Danish theology you will find a gradual thought development. Danish theologians contend that the church life will become decadent if there is no development in theological thinking, and they have fought for the right to penetrate the established wall of theological thought. You will notice a gradual thought development in the dogmatics of Martensen, Madsen, Scharling, Geismar, and Plum. A third characteristic is a right balance between the Word and the Sacraments. Danish theologians have done much to give the Sacraments their rightful place in the life of the Church. This also characterizes to a high degree Danish hymnology and devotional literature.

In this connection it would be in order to describe the system that prevails in the theological departments of the European universities. A professor of theology in Europe is not elected by the Church as such, and he cannot be removed by the Church. His position cannot be undermined by criticism and petty jealousies, as is too often the case in America. He can feel free to do independent and original thinking and present his views, even if they are contrary to the views of the students and the official Church. Such a system produces big theologians around whom flourish schools of theology as they are called in Europe. It would have been a distinct loss to the Church, had such men not been given a free hand to do research and independent thinking.

There is something wrong with our system when we do not give our theological professors freedom to do original and independent thinking. We will give them freedom if they will be true to form. If they will not

do that they will be either shelved, or compelled to shut up. Such a system will not produce big theologians. If the life of the Church is not to become stagnant and decadent, it must have a continual infusion of fresh blood in the form of thought development in theology. And the Lutheran Church can open its veins to an infusion of fresh blood because she is the Church of the Word. She need not be afraid of liberalism if she applies fearlessly the Evangelical principle that the inspired and infallible Word is the highest authority in the Church.

When Scandinavian theology is discussed, then the topic of liberalism is generally raised. But liberalism and liberalism are two different things. The subject is just as old as the Christian religion. When Christ began His ministry, some asked: "What is this, a new teaching?" Paul was also accused of presenting a new teaching. Savonarola, John Huss, Martin Luther, and others were accused of liberalism when they endeavored to give the Church a new spiritual outlook. There is liberalism in the Church of Scandinavia, and some very rank liberalism at that. But the issue is clearly clarified in Scandinavia. Men like Madsen and Hallesby did much to sift the kernel from the chaff. They showed that much that was called conservative Lutheranism was pseudo-Lutheranism. It borders on the ridiculous when these two men are called liberals.

What is liberalism? Those that accuse should give us a clear definition of liberalism. Where is the line of demarcation between liberalism and conservative Lutheranism? And who is to draw the line so that we know that it is drawn in the right place? When those who accuse others of liberalism are asked to define liberalism, then they generally hedge by saying, "Well, well." They would like to say, but do not dare to do so: "Well, he does not hold the same views of theology that I do, therefore, he is a liberal." They use their personal views of theology as the criterion for passing judgment on others. When such a fallible criterion is used in judging others, great injustice will be done to others. What sins have not been committed against brethren when personal views are put on the judgment seat! Sincerity will not save such a critic because sincerity is a poor substitute for truth.

Others will use verbal inspiration as the criterion for judging liberalism. If you accept verbal inspiration of the Bible, then you may pass as a good conservative Lutheran. If you do not accept verbal inspiration of the Bible, then you are classified as a liberal.

Others use the Anselmian theory of atonement as the criterion for judging liberalism. If you accept that theory, then you are a good conservative Lutheran. In his book, "Christus Victor," Aulen presents documentary proofs that Luther emphatically rejected the Anselmian theory of atonement. If Aulen is right then the Anselmian theory is not Lutheran teaching.

Which criterion shall we use in judging liberalism? Luther says that the living Christ, who is revealed to us through the Scriptures, is the criterion for judging all spiritual questions. In doing so Luther followed his Lord and Master Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Ne Testament criterion in judging all spiritual questions.

Who has spoken the following words: "We do n believe in Christ because the Scriptures tell us abo Him. But we believe the Scriptures because they r veal Christ." Some, perhaps, would say that such wor sound like the words of a rank liberal. Those words we spoken by Martin Luther. Luther makes the livi Christ the criterion in every spiritual question. It wou be well for Lutherans to follow Luther on this point.

Søderblom of Sweden and Geismar of Denmark ha been accused of liberalism. I believe that these two m have been greatly misunderstood. They did not acce theories of theology as a matter of fact. They endeavor to penetrate deeper and deeper into the mysteries theology. They wanted theology to be progressive. this background we should try to understand the They wrestled with difficult problems of theology th confronted the Church. They were not satisfied with t status quo of theological thinking. It has been good the Church that men have had the courage to wres with difficult problems of theology.

The right distinction between the Law and the Gosp and justification by faith are the cardinal principles the Lutheran Church. Søderblom and Geismar are cle on these two cardinal doctrines. Are men who are rig on these two cardinal principles of the Lutheran Churc liberals? Søderblom, Geismar, and Walther of the M souri Synod have helped me more than any other m on the questions of Law and Gospel and justification faith.

In connection with liberalism we must discuss t baffling problem of inspiration. When this question brought up for discussion then some generally get ke up to high pitch. But I take that to be a good sign th people are zealous about the Word of God. But in an lyzing their thoughts about inspiration, it is often th pet theory about inspiration that they want to defe I ask in all sinceriy: Is the Word of God so weak th we have to defend it, lest it be destroyed? The Word God does not stand or fall with any theory of inspiratio He who has said, "The Word of God remaineth foreve is the Guardian of His Word. It would not remain fo ever if it depended on our weak defense.

By presenting the topic of inspiration, it is not m intention to tear the Bible to pieces. Why should I so, since it is the Book that has brought me the u speakable Gift, Jesus Christ, who has redeemed me fro sin and given me eternal life. I approach the Bible wi the profoundest reverence for the authority of the Wo of God. The Word of God is not built on any theory inspiration. It is built on the living Christ. The Wo stands or falls with Him.

Inspiration of the Scriptures is a baffling problem w which the theologians have wrestled. I do not know anyone has solved the problem. The human mind limited, but God's ways are inscrutable and His juc ments unsearchable.

We should approach the Bible with an open mind.

come to the Bible with preconceived ideas of inspir-on, then there is danger that we will try to get the ble to fit our theory instead of making our theory the Bible. You cannot change the Bible with the-es. Some seminary instructors still try to impreg-te the mind of students with their own preconceived eas about the Bible and impress upon them that they st accept a theory about the Bible before they begin study the contents of the Bible. If they succeed in ing so, then there is danger that the students will call ose instructors liberals who teach that you should ap-oach the Bible with an open mind to find out what is e truth about God's revelation. Here is an important sson for American Lutherans to learn from Scandina-an theologians. Men like Madsen, Skovgaard-Peter-n, Skat-Rørdam, and Hallesby can teach us some im-ortant lessons on how to approach the Bible.

The crux of the problem of inspiration is the extent inspiration. Is every word in the Bible inspired? If e say that every word in the Bible is inspired, then we so say that the inaccuracies in the Bible are inspired. do not believe that an inaccuracy is inspired by the pirit of truth. That would be fatalism, and not Chris-an faith.

Those that hold the view that every word in the Bible inspired say that there were no inaccuracies in the riginal manuscripts. How does anyone dare make such statement? It is neither intellectual, nor moral hon-sty to build a theory on an unknown quantity. Why ot be frank and honest in saying that we do not know these inaccuracies were in the original manuscripts? Why did God permit Paul's lapse of memory as he con-esses in I Cor. 1:14-16? How does anyone dare say that hese words of Paul are infallible when Paul says that ney are not infallible?

We must distinguish between negative Biblical criti-ism and textual criticism. A negative Bible critic ap-roaches the Bible with the intention of tearing the Bible to pieces in order to undermine its authority. A extual critic is an honest seeker after truth. He ap-roaches the Bible with an open mind to establish the ruth in regard to God's revelation.

Let us mention some obvious inaccuracies in the Bible. n Matt. 23:35 we read, "Zachariah the son of Barachia." But in II Chron. 24:20 "Zechariah the son of Jahoida." n Mark 2:36 we read "Abiathar," but in I Sam. 21:16, 'Ahimelech." In Gal. 3:17 Paul writes that the Law was given 430 years after the covenant of promise was made to Abraham. 430 years is the time the Israelites so-journed in Egypt. But Jacob was 130 years old when he went to Egypt, and Isaac was 60 years old when Jacob was born which makes 620 years. In Heb. 9:3 it is stated that the altar of incense was in the Holy of Holies, but in Ex. 40:21-29 it is stated that it was placed in the Holy place. There are inaccuracies in the Bible, and inaccur-acies are not truth. Inaccuracies cannot be inspired be-cause they are not the Word of God.

When negative Bible criticism swept over Scandinavia from Germany and France, it caught the Church off guard. But men like Madsen, Henrick Scharling, Skat-Petersen, Skovgaard-Petersen, Geismar, Søderblom, Hallesby, and others put their scholarly talents to work analyzing the works of the negative critics. They approached the problem with an open mind and sifted the kernel from the chaff. They produced some positive results and showed that there was some truth in what the negative critics said. They showed that the inaccuracies in the Bible did not undermine the authority of the Word of God. The inaccuracies and the 200,000 variations in the MSS from which our Bible is translated have not affected one jot or tittle of God's plan of salvation revealed in the Scriptures through Jesus Christ. That it is so gives me confidence in the Word of God, and it is conclusive proof that the Word of God is inspired and infallible.

This raises the question if it is correct to say that the Bible is the Word of God. The statement, at least, needs clarification. If the statement is to be taken literally, then the committees that have given us the American Standard Version and Revised Standard Version have butchered the Word of God. The American Standard Version has eliminated portions of Scripture found in the King James Version, and likewise the Revised Standard Version has omitted portions of Scripture found in the American Standard Version.

Those that champion the view that the Bible is the Word of God will hurry to say that they will make due allowances for textual criticism. With one hand they build a structure, and with the other hand they undermine the structure they have built.

I make the bold statement that the clause: "The Bible is the Word of God" is not Lutheran teaching. This view is not found in the Augsburg Confession, nor in Luther's Small Catechism. And I doubt that this view is found in any of Luther's writings when we consider what he said about some of the books of the Bible.

The question of inspiration of the Scriptures is not an issue of conservative Lutheranism versus liberalism. It is the issue of the authority of the Word of God versus the validity of theories of inspiration. In the last analysis it is the issue of true Lutheranism versus pseudo-Lutheranism. The Lutheran Church has never declared itself in favor of any one theory of inspiration. But it has declared unequivocally in the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism that the Word of God is inspired and infallible, and that the inspired Word is infallible for doctrine, faith, and practice.

What is the Word of God? Only the Word of God is inspired. We will get into a dilemma if we make the Bible identical with the Word of God.

The Bible reveals an infallible plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. The words that reveal Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Redeemer of man constitute the inspired and infallible Word of God, and the words that reveal Christ cover the wide range from Genesis to Revelation. I have been taught from childhood from Balslev's Explanation of the Catechism that "the Old Testament points forward to the Saviour who

was to come, and the New Testament tells us about Christ who has come." I believe that the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation, except the inaccuracies, is the inspired and infallible Word of God which presents an infallible plan of salvation for lost man.

I am indebted to Dr. Madsen of Denmark and Dr. Hallesby of Norway for their presentation of inspiration. These two men are recognized as sound and outstanding theologians who championed conservative Lutheranism.

Their views may be summarized thus: "We have not an infallible Bible, but God has revealed to us through the Bible an infallible plan of salvation in Jesus Christ." To say that the Bible is infallible and that the Word of God is infallible are two different things.

When Bible criticism was raging in Denmark, Dr. Peder Madsen was coming to the fore as an outstanding theologian. Some wondered what attitude he would take toward Biblical criticism. After he had made a thorough study of the whole problem he made the following brief statement: "Let the Bible be subject to a keen, scientific analysis. If every word in the Bible is the Word of God, then it will stand the test. If there is something in the Bible that is not the Word of God, then it is best for the Church that it knows about it." Then the storm broke loose over his head. He was accused of liberalism and the challenge was hurled at him: "On your knees before the Bible, professor." Dr. Madsen did not permit himself to be intimidated by such tactics. He answered in his calm and dignified manner that he was daily on his knees before the God revealed to him through the Bible.

That the Word of God is inspired is presented in Scripture as a fact. It is a miracle which must be accepted in faith. The miracle of inspiration cannot be solved by human reason. No theory of inspiration is inspired because it is the product of human reason. Theories come and theories go, but the fact that the Word of God is inspired will remain forever. This inspired Word reveals Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Redeemer of lost man. Whosoever accepts the revealed Christ receives forgiveness of sins and eternal life. This inspired Word of God is the infallible rule for doctrine, faith, and practice. This Evangelical principle is a protecting power in the Church against the encroachment of human reason which has always been an enemy of Evangelical truth. Speculative theology is a subtle form of human reason, and nothing more than refined rationalism.

The living Christ who is revealed to me through the inspired Word beckons my soul to come unto Him. And His love, which will not let me go, embraces my soul so that I dare rest my weary soul on His mercy and grace. I have unlimited confidence in that Word which brings me Christ.

The Devotional Life

There is always a close connection between the theology and the devotional life of the Church. We would not get a correct picture of the Church of Scandinavia without considering the devotional life of those three countries. The theology of Scandinavia has born fru in a strong and healthy spiritual life in the Church. TH official Church of Scandinavia is not as rigid as it is i America. In America the tendency is toward conformiti All must be cut from the same pattern and fit into on mold. In Scandinavia men of different types of life ca work together within the framework of the same Churc In Denmark men like Mynster, Grundtvig, Beck, an Ricard worked for the same objective in the sam Church. The result was a deep and rich spiritual lif with a wide horizon. In America the tendency is to regu late life by rules and regulations. In the Church c Scandinavia there is a strong discipline of the Spirit And the discipline imposed by the Spirit is always th best discipline.

Due to the ultra conservative theology of the Lu theran Church of America, the tendency is to emphasiz the objective phase of the Christian life at the expens of the subjective. As I see it, in Scandinavia there is good balance between the objective and the subjectiv phases of the Christian life.

The spiritual life of a Church is always reflected in it devotional literature. The Churches of Denmark, Nor way and Sweden have produced a rich harvest of de votional literature. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

The life of the churches of Scandinavia and Germany is reflected in the sacred hymns and sacred music of the masters. We would not have had the rich heritage o hymnody and music, had there not been a deep and rich life in the Church. Our rich heritage of Lutheran chor ales can rightfully be called a fruit of the Spirit. The one who is not edified by the music of the masters mus have a very barren soul. By the strains of the music o the masters one's soul is lifted into the celestial realm where God dwells and spirit communes with spirit.

The one who touches the deep chords of the soul i Søren Kierkegaard in his devotional discourses. There deep calleth unto deep. One cannot read Kierkegaard without being impressed with the fact that he had been wrestling with God and would not let God go until He had blessed him. Kierkegaard's devotional discourses are precious gems that are worth their weight in gold especially the sermon on the text: "Love covereth a multitude of sins."

Some have the idea that Kierkegaard is made of steel who only shoots fiery darts at others. But there is another Kierkegaard that we should learn to know, the humble Christian who had heeded the Divine injunction: "Put out into the deep and cast your net out for a draft." By reading Kierkegaard you can hear deep calling unto deep. Kierkegaard touches the deep chords of the soul, because he had first been touched by the Master.

In his book "Kierkegaard in His Prayer Chamber," Villads Christensen shows what a sincere and honest devotional life Kierkegaard lived. According to outward appearances Kierkegaard was a very unhappy man. But Villads Christensen shows that Kierkegaard was a devout Christian who lived in intimate and happy

mmunion with God. His soul was at rest with God rough the assurance of forgiveness of sins.

What Villads Christensen writes about Kierkegaard's athbed is very impressive. Kierkegaard lived the eat solitaire, and that was also the way he died. The ly one Kierkegaard wanted to have by his bedside hen death drew near was his bosom friend, Boisen. t Kierkegaard did not talk much with Boisen. He anted to be alone with God in prayer. Boisen said at there was a celestial stillness in the room. And as e end drew near, Kierkegaard's face became like the ce of an angel. The restless soul had come to rest in od.

When Søderblom was on a tour of America a few ears ago, some Lutherans did not take to him very ndly. But those that heard him preach said that they d never heard anyone that could present Christ as e did. It was a message of redemption and release that ouched the deep chords of the soul. You cannot read øderblom without being impressed by the way he deals ith the soul-life. He understood the inner life of the hristian with its struggles and joys because he had imself experienced the inner communion with God.

Eduard Geismar of Denmark is another man with a eep soul. It is so refreshing to read Geismar's books. e speaks about the Cross and the love of God in a nique way. The Cross occupies a central place in all his writings. He says that from the Cross of Christ proceed both judgment and grace, a crushing judgment on every sin and unrighteousness of men, but full grace to every one who takes refuge in the merits of Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

I began these remarks by stating that I took my stand on the inspired and infallible Word of God. I wish to close by saying that I am firmly convinced that that is the only right thing to do, because that Word brings Christ to me. His love beckons my soul so that I dare flee into His bosom of love where I can rest my weary soul.

This story is told about August Strindberg, the Søren Kierkegaard of Sweden, when he was lying on his deathbed. His admirers were calling his attention to the many books he had written. Strindberg reached out his hand and placed it on the old Swedish Bible as he said: "This is the only one. I have no more to say." Strindberg, who lived a restless life, had arrived at the point where the only voice he cared to listen to was the Voice of God speaking to him from the Scriptures.

Theology is words about God and His dealings with men. Anyone who studies theology should have a keen ear for the still, small voice speaking to him from the Scriptures on which theology is based. "Be still and know that I am God." That is theology at its best.

Conference Convention

THE BIENNIAL CONVENTION of the American Lutheran Conference was held at Faith Church, Detroit, the Rev. Charles Lange, pastor, Nov. 10-12.

Perhaps the most interesting business of the convention as far as our readers are concerned is the report of the Commission on Lutheran Unity, and the resolutions of the Conference following that report.

Report of the Commission on Lutheran Church Unity

For a second time your Commission on Lutheran Church Unity is compelled to report a biennium of inactivity. Four years ago at the Milwaukee convention, the Commission was continued by Conference action, but with specific instructions to "continue its work as directed by the Executive Committee." During the past two bienniums no such directive has come from the Executive Committee, wherefore no meeting of the Commission has been called.

The reason for this inactivity is not difficult to understand. In view of the impasse which had been reached in every approach toward Lutheran unity, including the barren results of the Commission's own *Overture for Lutheran Unity* which the Conference adopted four years ago at Milwaukee, it was deemed advisable to adopt a policy of "watchful waiting." Moreover, American Lutheranism has been so completely absorbed during the last few years in the gigantic task of meeting emergencies brought upon world Lutheranism by World War II, it has found neither time nor energy to devote to the problem of reaching closer understanding at home. However, the unity of action and purpose which has developed as a result of this common task has not been without its blessings to the participating Churches, and the marvelous spirit of co-operation which has resulted may eventually be revealed as one of God's own ways of bringing us together.

Many had begun to despair that any further efforts to bring about Lutheran unity at this time would yield results. It had been pointed out that not a single important advance toward closer relations between the various Lutheran bodies had been achieved since the formation of the American Lutheran Church and the organization of the American Lutheran Conference in 1930. A period of nearly two decades had gone by, marked by fruitless discussions and negotiations. It is evident, however, that one of "God's Moments" was in process of making even during these discouraging years. The Spirit of God has been at work in the hearts of God's people, and today we are suddenly confronted with an insistent urge from many quarters not merely to seek for Lutheran unity but to aim at the larger goal of Lutheran union. Indeed, the movement seems to have sprung up spon-

taneously in various groups, as so often is the case when one of "God's Moments" has arrived.

All of this is seen reflected in the numerous official pronouncements on unity adopted by various Lutheran bodies during the present year. It will be the purpose of this report to present in summary some of these recent developments, especially as they are reflected in actions of the constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference.

1. The *Augustana Lutheran Church* was the first body to meet this year, and hence the first to go on record in the matter of Lutheran unity. In response to a memorial from one of its Conferences suggesting that the Synod initiate action looking toward organic union of the cooperating bodies of the National Lutheran Council, the Church took the following action:

> Resolved, That the petition be granted, and Synod does hereby declare itself in favor of the organic union of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council together with any other Lutheran groups which may desire to join such a union, with federation as an intermediate step if necessary; and be it further
>
> Resolved, That the Executive Council be requested to initiate action on behalf of the Church looking toward such union.

2. The *United Evangelical Lutheran Church,* meeting in Fresno, Calif., on June 17, adopted the following resolution:

> Resolved, That we, the members of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in convention assembled, June 17, 1948, hereby authorize the Church Council to appoint a commission consisting of the President, the Vice-President, and the Secretary, together with two lay members of the Synod; that this commission be instructed to contact the Church Councils or authorized officials of the constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference and invite them to initiate discussions collectively by representatives of the bodies, with the view of bringing about a greater cooperation and an eventual merger of the bodies of the American Lutheran Conference and the other Lutheran Churches of our land."

President N. C. Carlsen of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church interprets this resolution to mean that his body looks forward to an eventual merger of all Lutheran bodies in America, but that the first step in that direction should be an organic union of the bodies of the American Lutheran Conference.

3. The *Evangelical Lutheran Church,* meeting for its biennial convention in Minneapolis in June, adopted the following resolution:

> Inasmuch as the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, so closely allied with us in teaching, in confession, and in spiritual life and history, through official channels has indicated the desire for a closer union with our Church; and
>
> Inasmuch as it is the earnest desire of The Evangelical Lutheran Church to meet such possible approaches with all cordiality:
>
> BE IT RESOLVED, That the Church Council be and hereby is instructed to appoint a union committee which shall be authorized to institute negotiations with the United Evangelical Lutheran Church and with such other constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference as may officially express desire for such approach. This union committee shall have no authority beyond that specifically given by the convention in the matter of entering into new relationships.

4. *The American Lutheran Church,* meeting in biennial convention at Fremont, Ohio, Oct. 7-14, rejected the first recommendations on unity brought forward by its floor committee because they were not regarded as sufficiently strong. On the following day the following resolutions were submitted and adopted:

> Whereas, We are committed to the ultimate unity of all Lutherans in America as God's will for us, and
>
> Whereas, We are hopeful that much progress can be made in the immediate future toward realization of this ideal, in view of the fact that several bodies, namely, the United Lutheran Church in America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, have recently adopted resolutions looking toward closer affiliation with other Lutheran synods; and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, at its 1947 convention voted the reappointment of a Committee on Doctrinal Unity to continue negotiations with our Committee on Fellowship, and
>
> Whereas, We are desirous to make our full contribution to the attainment of Lutheran unity, therefore be it
>
> *Resolved,* 1. That we reaffirm our position on "Selective Fellowship," (cf. *Minutes,* 1946, Appleton, Wis.) expressing our gratitude and joy over the measure of fellowship that has already been attained with respect to both the United Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
>
> 2. That we pledge our vigorous co-operation in the expanding program of activity of the National Lutheran Council, looking to the day when all Lutheran church bodies will hold membership in the National Lutheran Council.
>
> 3. That we continue a Committee on Fellowship to be appointed by the president of the Church to negotiate with a Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, toward the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship or of fellowship commensurate with the existing degree of unity.
>
> 4. That this committee together with the Executive Committee of the Church be instructed to explore the possibilities of merger with interested bodies within the American Lutheran Conference and report its progress at the next meeting of the Church.

5. That we empower this committee together with the Executive Committee of the Church to receive and consider resolutions which may emanate from the United Lutheran Church in America now in convention assembled at Philadelphia and to discuss with any and all Lutheran church bodies possible approaches and methods to attain fuller unity and closer affiliation.

5. The *Lutheran Free Church* was the only member body of the Conference that took no action on Lutheran Unity.

6. Here should also be noted the favorable action on unity taken by the United Lutheran Church in America, which met in Philadelphia, Pa., in the very week that the American Lutheran Church was in Fremont. This made it possible for the two conventions to exchange information relative to their respective actions on unity. The resolution adopted by the U.L.C. may be summarized as follows:

> It expressed its willingness to consider organic union with all or any of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council, and it instructed its Special Commission on Relations to American Lutheran Church Bodies to meet with similar commissions of bodies in the National Lutheran Council "to confer upon and negotiate organic union or steps leading thereto."
>
> Authorization was also given to the U.L.C. Commission to participate in drafting a constitution and in devising the organizational procedures that may seem necessary to effect such union.

Vote by the convention was unanimous and was greeted by heavy applause from delegates and visitors, according to News Bureau of the National Lutheran Council. An enthusiastic reception was also accorded the announcement that the American Lutheran Church, meeting simultaneously, had expressed willingness to "receive and consider" resolutions on Lutheran unity which might emanate from the U.L.C. sessions.

7. For the information of the Conference, we would also transmit a resolution on Lutheran unity adopted by the National Lutheran Editors' Association at its annual meeting in Rock Island, Ill., Sept. 23. Perhaps no group in the Lutheran Church has given more thought and study to the problem of unity than have the editors. It was a group of editors, meeting unofficially with the National Lutheran Council at Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1942, that first advanced the idea of all All-Lutheran Federation which could use the National Lutheran Council as its functional agency. The National Lutheran Council responded favorably to this memorial and elected a special committee to study the specific proposals.

It is significant that the resolution adopted by the editors this year suggests the same approach to the problem as was advocated in 1942. The resolution of Sept. 23, 1948, follows:

In the deep conviction that we are standing at one of the fateful crossroads of history, with the world filled with spiritual confusion and despair, with the fear of war gripping men's minds everywhere, and with secular movements and human governments challenging the place and authority of the Church and seeking to restrict its activities and influence, we, the members of the National Lutheran Editors' Association, assembled at Rock Island, Ill., September 22 and 23, 1948, unanimously and wholeheartedly agree on the following propositions:

1. We are convinced that the times call more urgently than ever for the unity of the Lutheran church bodies in America. Here at home we sense, among many other factors, the extreme importance of retaining our strong position as a Lutheran Church in rural America. We are convinced that the union of our Lutheran forces will be an important factor toward that end. Similarly we are deeply convinced by all the reports that come to us concerning conditions in Europe and elsewhere in the world that the union of our Lutheran forces in America would be a most effective means of succoring and rebuilding world Lutheranism.

2. We note with humble gratitude to God the increasing measure of co-operation among Lutherans on parish and wider levels. The many all-Lutheran organizations in specialized fields, such as this National Association of Lutheran Editors and Publishing House Managers, affords another cheering proof of the actuality of Lutheran co-operation and of the benefits of such co-operation. We also rejoice in the fruitful all-Lutheran seminars and conferences that are being held in various parts of the country. All of these things cause us to thank God and to take courage as we face the prospects of fuller and broader Lutheran unity and cooperation.

3. We are of one mind and spirit in the conviction that the formation of one Lutheran federation, as recommended by a group of editors at a convention of the National Lutheran Council in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1942, should continue to be the goal of our endeavors and the burden of our prayers.

4. Toward the consummation of such a federation we urgently recommend an intensification and extension of the present means and methods of getting together, planning together, and working together as Lutherans. Specifically we recommend:

a. The strengthening and widening of the National Lutheran Council so that it becomes the powerful service arm of all the Lutheran Churches in America.

b. The holding of free, fraternal conferences to further, by frank and open discussion, the union of all Lutheran Churches in America. The objective of these conferences would be to endeavor to determine, in the light of the Word of God, whether the things that now separate us are actually divisive of church fellowship and what steps are necessary to bring about a complete understanding.

c. The prompt and aggressive development of existing cooperation of Lutherans on parish and wider levels. We commend the formation of city, regional and state councils of Lutherans as helpful toward this end.

5. We are convinced that it is part of the inescapable stewardship of the whole Lutheran Church in America to face this problem of Lutheran unity without delay and without excuse, working toward closer and more fruitful unity while it is day before the night cometh when no man can work.

We would also call attention to the growing interest among Lutheran laymen in the problem of Lutheran unity. Some of the most insistent voices calling for action are coming from this direction, and it would be well for our church to listen to what our men are saying.

Our times call for bold, heroic action on the part of the Lutheran Church. Something of a divine urgency is being sensed throughout all Christendom. Unquestionably it was this feeling of a divine imperative that brought representatives of nearly 150 communions to Amsterdam last summer to establish the World Council of Churches. In the face of that achievement, with practically all Lutherans in the world co-operating, the scandal of Lutheran disunity in America is becoming increasingly intolerable. Lutherans can hardly escape asking themselves very soberly how much longer they can seek to justify this situation in the eyes of God and of men.

In this connection it might be pointed out that our Conference, at its 1942 convention in Rock Island, Ill., expressed its conviction that "The American Lutheran Conference must leave the door open, as far as it is concerned, for all Lutheran bodies," and it recommended that "the Executive Committee of the American Lutheran Conference be instructed to negotiate with all other Lutheran bodies, looking toward a more inclusive organization whose constituency shall be truly representative of the Lutheran Church in America."

Two years ago at Rockford, Ill., it adopted two resolutions, reading as follows:

1. The Conference reaffirms its attitude expressed in the resolution of the Rock Island Convention, namely, that it is looking toward a more inclusive organization whose constituency shall be truly representative of the Lutheran Church of America.

2. The Conference declares to the National Lutheran Council its undeviating purpose to find through this agency the door to effective unities in faith and in labor for all Lutheran Churches in America.

While your Commission has no specific recommendations to offer, it would seem that the hour is here to take a definite forward step in the direction of Lutheran unity, either by inviting all Lutheran bodies in America to join in the formation of an All-Lutheran Federation, or to make the more courageous venture of faith by proposing organic union of the cooperating bodies of the National Lutheran Council.

Our prayer is that the Spirit of God may be truly present in our convention and that we may be divinely guided in what may prove to be the most important issue that has ever come before our Conference.

Conference Resolutions on Unity

Thanking God for the inner spiritual unity that already exists among the Lutherans of America, as evidenced in our many cooperative endeavors, and envisioning ultimate unification of the whole Lutheran Church in our country, in a form which will effectually preserve the riches and breadth of our Lutheran heritage and make a greater contribution to the life of the whole Christian Church in America, the American Lutheran Conference hereby commits itself to the following program:

1. We pledge our whole-hearted cooperation in the expanding activities of the National Lutheran Council, looking to the day when all Lutheran church bodies shall participate in the Council.

2. We recommend that the constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference petition the National Lutheran Council to call an all-Lutheran Free Conference to be held under the auspices of the Council, with a view to the permanent organization of such a conference.

3. We look with favor upon the steps toward organizational union now being considered by several bodies within the American Lutheran Conference and the National Lutheran Council, and rejoice in the hope that each such step will lead toward the ultimate goal of complete Lutheran unity.

4. We recommend that each of the constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference inaugurate a program of education throughout its congregations for the purpose of leading the rank and file of its membership to a deeper and more informed consciousness of unity among the Lutheran Churches of America, and for the further promotion of that unity at the congregational level, thus helping to lay enduring foundations for the future unification of the Lutheran Church in our country.

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We hope to bring more of the reports of various Commissions to the Conference in next month's issue. Here we have room yet for a report made by Rev. Conrad Hoyer on the work of the Division of American Missions (National Lutheran Council) at the request of President Stavig of the American Lutheran Conference.

Division of American Missions

We are pleased to reply to your request for a summary of the activities of the Division of American Missions for the past two years. Our summary indicates the extent of present cooperation in American Missions and suggests possibilities for the future. For purposes of clarity, we classify our activities into seven categories as follows:

1) Continuing emergency ministry in temporary communities,
2) Work in the Missouri Valley,
3) Home mission coordination,
4) Rural church life program,
5) Department for the Christian Approach to the Jewish People,
6) Research and conference concerning American Missions, and
7) Other activities.

1) *Emergency Ministry in Temporary Communities*

The Division of American Missions was established six years ago to develop a war emergency service to the new temporary communities brought into being by the great migration to the war industry centers. During the war years we served in fifty of the 500 temporary communities. Some of these communities have now become permanent and the work which started as an emergency service has resulted in the establishment of eight regular home mission congregations. Many other such communities continue as temporary but they are crowded with people and the ministry of the church is as much needed as ever. Wherever possible the responsibility of continuing this work has been delegated to nearby congregations. This has been done in at least a dozen situations. Even so, the Division of American Missions is still serving in eleven temporary communities as of October 1, of this year. These communities are located in San Pedro, Richmond (three housing projects), and Oakland, California; Vancouver and Richland, Washington; Willow Run, Michigan; Cleveland and Dayton, Ohio; Baltimore, Maryland. Most of the people in these housing areas are veterans and their families. Response to the ministry has been good and many thousands of people have been reached with the message of the Gospel.

The service rendered in the Vanport flood disaster left a positive and permanent impression upon many hundreds of people. The fact that at least ten young men are preparing for the ministry as a result of the ministry in temporary communities illustrates one phase of the service rendered. Six of the eleven Sunday schools in temporary communities have enrollments of well over 200 children.

New work was taken over at the beginning of this year among the trailers at North Richland, Washington, and at this writing there are nearly 2000 families living in trailers and several thousand other people living in barracks in this new atomic construction community.

In view of the fact that no support for the work in temporary communities will be available from Lutheran World Action after the current appeal, we are working toward the reprogramming of nearly all of the work by the end of 1949. We anticipate that some will have to be continued into 1950 and we plan to keep a small reserve from emergency funds for this purpose. We are also asking the Council to make provision in the regular budget for 1950 for support of work that must be continued through that year and beyond.

The experiences in these cooperative emergency home mission ventures illustrates the possibility of doing the mission work of God together. The fact of different synods has been a very minor problem in our work. Our staff on the one hand, and the people in the housing areas on the other hand, found a remarkable unanimity of message and purpose.

2) *Missouri Valley*

Although the work in the Missouri Valley is the newest of the activities of the Division of American Missions we report it second because it is intimately related to the work in temporary communities. Our urgent interest in the work of the Missouri Valley came because the dam construction communities were just like the war boom communities of 1942. Members of the Division Committee were convinced that the church could serve cooperatively in temporary communities more effectively than they could serve individually; therefore, the Committee proposed that we undertake this work as an activity of the Council. By action of the Council at its special meeting in April, authority was given to undertake this work through 1949 using emergency funds. We are asking the Council to make budget provision for the work through 1950 and beyond.

Huge dams are already under construction at Pickstown, near Lake Andes, South Dakota; at Riverdale, near Garrison, North Dakota; and at other points along the Missouri and its tributaries. Hungry Horse, Montana, is definitely related to the Missouri Valley program, and here, too, a huge dam is under construction. We have the entire master plan of the dam construction program in the Missouri Valley, and we have been fortunate in securing the services of Rev. A. M. Eidbo to undertake the ministry at Riverdale, North Dakota, and to assume responsibility for the development of the program in the Missouri Valley. As we can see the program it will include: 1) A ministry to the temporary communities connected with the dam construction, 2) A service to families displaced by the inundation of large areas, 3) An over-all study of social, economic, and population readjustments in the area so that the church may be ready to meet the challenge of these new changes.

The Missouri Valley is in the heart of strong Lutheran territory and the Lutheran Church has much at stake. The temporary communities connected with dam construction reflect the Lutheran population and it is of interest to note that twenty-five per cent of the people at the Riverdale project indicate Lutheran membership or give a Lutheran preference. As the population of the project increases the Lutheran ratio is also on the increase.

Services have been held at Riverdale every other Sunday since the first of the year, and Sunday School and services every Sunday morning were arranged as soon as Pastor Eidbo could come to the project. Seventy-one worshipers were in attendance at the first regular morning service in October. No work has been done in other projects as yet, but we anticipate this work as soon as

Pastor Eidbo becomes familiar with the field and as soon as the work at Riverdale has been properly developed. We entered this work of the Missouri Valley none too soon. If we had come even a month later we would have had difficulty to get in at all. At Riverdale, as in temporary communities generally, we have found it of great advantage that the work is undertaken as a joint project for all the Lutheran churches of the National Lutheran Council.

3) *Home Mission Coordination*

Twenty-five Regional Home Mission Committees in the United States and five in Canada provide the machinery for cooperation on the level of coordinating home mission activities. Every one of these committees has met at least once each year and most of the committees meet two, three, or four times a year. The Regional Committees quite generally now devote at least one meeting a year to study of new home mission opportunities in the areas served. The Regional Committees, likewise, give attention to the home mission aspects of the problem of relocation of congregations. This is a development of the last two years and it came none too soon, for many congregations in the large cities have made plans to relocate in other sections of the city as soon as building materials can be secured. There has been some delay in relocation due to the present high cost of building, but it is only a delay.

The principal activity of the Regional Committee, of course, has to do with the clearance of home mission fields. Procedures have been developed and they are now so commonly accepted that only rarely does a committee experience any difficulty in the matter of assignment of fields. The spirit of cooperation is so generally recognized that the Regional Committees have functioned in this sphere with very little friction. During the past twelve months the Committees gave attention to 208 fields, assigned 130 fields for occupancy, and 69 new missions were recorded as actually established. (The report of the preceding twelve months indicates a little more activity in all phases.) The shortage of man power and the limits to church extension funds has resulted in sharp curtailment of requests for new fields. Instead there has been a marked increase in release of fields previously assigned.

Certain basic assumptions are implied in the program of complete comity as it is followed through the Lutheran Regional Home Mission Committees. These assumptions are:

1) that there is room for all of us so that we need not fight for "living space" in our home mission enterprise;

2) that any one of the bodies assigned a field both *can* and *will* serve all of the Lutherans in that field;

3) that any one of the bodies assigned to a field both *can* and *will* faithfully represent the message and the spirit of the Lutheran Church to the entire community.

Thus, a high degree of unity is assumed in our present comity arrangements. In view of the universal acceptance of these comity arrangements this high degree of unity is practically recognized by the Church.

Somewhat related to the Regional Home Missions Committee activity and quite definitely related to the question of relocation of congregations is the larger question of over-all strategy in our urban communities. The rapid changes in the urban centers, the trend to the suburbs and beyond the suburbs to the "rurban" areas, the decentralization of industry, encouraged by present government leadership, and the mass building of new communities in terms of 1,000 homes or more, all create new and serious problems for the church in the urban areas, which will have to be thought through, and planned together. Our Division has recommended that a staff member be elected, specially responsible for the over-all study of these and related problems. Pastor C. P. Rasmussen served in that capacity until he was called by the Lutheran Commission on Evangelism and he continues to serve in a limited way even now. Regional Committees have welcomed the information, the new insights, and the direct consultation service which Pastor Rasmussen was able to give. Without his full time, we are able to give only limited service, though the office is seeking to keep abreast of the movements in city planning and to relay information to Regional Committees, and the mission executives.

4) *Rural Church Life Program*

There has been a growing interest in, and concern for, the church in the rural community during the past twenty years. This interest and concern among the Reformed churches found expression in the establishment of the Town and Country Committee of the Home Mission Council of North America. It finds expression in Catholic circles in the Catholic Rural Life Program under Father Ligutti. Lutherans, too, were concerned, for the Lutheran Church was essentially a rural church, and proportionately, it was more established in the country than either the Roman or the Reformed churches.

Several of the Lutheran bodies appointed Rural Life Committees to study the problems of the Rural Church. In view of the fact that the problems were common for all of the bodies of the National Lutheran Council, the Reverend E. W. Mueller was elected as Assistant to the Executive Secretary for the Division of American Missions to give special attention to the church in rural areas for all the bodies in the Council. Pastor Mueller has attacked the problem with intelligence and vigor, and after three years of study, travel, consultation, and much speaking, the picture of the church is much different. At least we are alert to the problems of hundreds, and congregations have organized to meet the problems that confront them. During the past two years, rural church life institutes have been held. State conferences and area meetings have been conducted. A loan library has been developed and the advanced interest in the church in the country finds its most recent expression in the organization of the North Dakota Rural Life Commission. This Commission, organized by the North Da-

ota District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, has alled an Executive Director, and other bodies in North akota have been invited to cooperate in support and in epresentation on this Commission.

Pastor Mueller's work has been carried out in close ooperation with the various Synodical Rural Church ommittees. Pastor Mueller has spent considerable time n research, and he has made State Studies of the fifteen tates in which the Lutheran Church has its greatest trength. Five of these studies, Nebraska, Minnesota, owa, North Dakota, and South Dakota, have been com-leted and sent to the Home Mission Executives and to he Regional Committee members serving the states con-erned.

One of the specific assignments in connection with work in rural areas has to do with realistic approach to verlapping in rural areas. Pastor Mueller has attacked his problem by gathering and disseminating information concerning the facts in the whole picture, and this in-formation has been reported to the areas concerned. A committee of the National Lutheran Council has been appointed to give special attention to this matter and we are waiting for the report of this committee before pro-ceeding further. We can say now, that the intersynodical overlapping problem in rural areas is almost entirely a problem of the Midwest States, with the problem con-centrated in Minnesota and North Dakota.

In connection with the question of overlapping our office has mapped several of the states where the Lu-theran Church is strong in rural areas, and these maps will be of much value when they can be transferred to film strips for use at Church Conventions, Brotherhood meetings, Luther League meetings, etc. They give the picture of the Lutheran Church in each section of the state just as it is.

5) *Department for the Christian Approach to the Jewish People*

The Department for the Christian Approach to the Jewish People was established in April 1947. For the most part, the Jewish people have been neglected in the missionary outreach of the Lutheran Church and it is the purpose of this Department to remind our church-es that the Gospel is for the Jew, and to assist the churches in bringing the Gospel to the Jewish people. The Gospel is still Good News for Israel. Pastor Harold Floreen was called to serve as Secretary of the Depart-ment and he has served in that capacity since the first of September. Previous to this call, he served as Edu-cational Field Representative for the Department, and assisted the Executive Secretary of the Division in spe-cial studies connected with the work among the Jewish people and in interpreting the cause of our mission re-sponsibility to the Jews by addressing seminary student bodies, church conventions, missionary groups, etc. About the first of December, a special study will be re-leased concerning the present activities of our Lutheran parishes with respect to the evangelization of Jewish people. This study will be most revealing. The study will indicate that the parishes are already doing some work in connection with the evangelization of the Jew-ish people, and that some of our parishes have done a most excellent work in this regard. It is conclusive enough to show what can be done when our Church will "include the Jew also" in its missionary outreach.

The Department is also carrying on the fine work in Baltimore and Pittsburg, established by the United Lu-theran Church, and transferred to our Department when the Department was established. The work at Phila-delphia has also been reactivitated.

However, though we do not expect that the establish-ment of this Department will ipso facto work for the mass conversion of the Jews to Christianity, we believe that it can serve in a most important and effective way in helping the church to recognize and assume its re-sponsibility to bring the Gospel also to Israel. The in-terest and the cooperation on the part of the several bodies has been most encouraging.

6) *Research and Conference*

Each year the Division of American Missions has spon-sored a Lutheran Home Mission Conference to enable the home mission interests of the church bodies in the Dakota have been invited to co-operate in support and in formation concerning the work of home missions. The conference of 1947 was held in Toledo, Ohio, and it was a highlight for everyone present. The theme "Open Doors in American Missions" emphasized and illustrated the many opportunities which the Lutheran Church en-joys today. The papers given at the conference were published in brochure form and these brochures were used as text books and resource books in many courses in Home Missions at our theological seminaries. The conference of 1948 will be held at the Belmont Hotel in Chicago, December 6, 7, 8. It has been planned as a conference for administrators and executives in the field of home missions.

Of course, home mission groups of the several bodies of the Council share information with one another as their executives meet together twice a year on the Div-ision Committee of the Division of American Missions. This, in itself, is a matter of great importance.

Our office has channeled important information to the home mission offices and to the regional home mission committees concerning trends and movements in Amer-ica that affect home mission planning, and this informa-tion seems to be of help in developing an over-all strat-egy for planting the Lutheran Church in America.

7) *Other Activities*

We should mention that a Department of Special Mis-sions has been approved by the Council and has been approved in principle by seven of the eight participating bodies of the Council. However, when the structure for this department was prepared, the Executive Committee of the Council suggested that we ought to consider the feasibility of undertaking the work contemplated by this

Department of Special Missions as an integral part of the work of the Division of American Missions. We were asked to reconsider the structure with a view to a possible outline of activities that would make it possible to do the work in the special mission areas without establishing a special department. Such a proposed outline has been submitted to the Executive Committee of the Council. There seems to be a growing interest on the part of many people in the several bodies of the Council concerning work in several of the special mission areas. None of the bodies care to undertake "new work" in any of these special mission fields except in cooperation with others, for there is a feeling that one group alone could hardly do enough to make the work significant.

In the field of Negro Missions a pattern of cooperation outside the framework of the National Lutheran Council has developed whereby the Augustana Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Lutheran Church, contribute to the work of Negro Missions of the American Lutheran Church and they have representation on the Commission of Negro Missions.

Three groups in the Council have Latin-American mission work in America. Three groups in the Council have work among the American Indians. Two groups have work among the Orientals.

The Division office has also given an intersynodical Membership Transfer and Contact service to the several bodies, and has served as the agent for the Augustana Synod Membership Transfer and Contact Service on a special per hour charge basis. In view of the high rate of mobility it is quite apparent that the church must do more than it has in following the people who move.

*

After six years of service as Executive Secretary of the Division of American Missions, we are more convinced than ever that the work of bringing Christ to America is the work of the Lutheran Church. We are convinced, too, that it can be, and should be thought, and planned, and done together, for there is more to do than we can do. We have been much encouraged during these years for the "will to cooperate" was surprisingly evident when we began the work in the temporary housing communities, and that "wtll to cooperate" continues. Home mission leaders are just as eager to work together now as then. In many respects, they are more willing and more eager to work together. Suggestions for new areas of cooperative endeavor are frequently proposed. The experience in cooperation has been fruitful and reassuring.

SICK VISIT

Lady slept silently, glad
it was soon over.
I watched her helplessly,
young preacher, minister
used to irresponsibility.

They tried to wake her
but her breath said no.
Little lady uncomplainingly
nodded a grey head,
slept on disdainingly.

Doctors in long white
assented with speechlessness—
no more to tell.
I left her wishing
I shall die as well.

—Walter Riess.

Lutherans in the News

Lutheran Free Church

By H. C. Caspersen

The Nokomis Heights Lutheran congregation, of the LFC, Minneapolis, dedicated its new, fine, and large church on Sunday, September 26. The pastor of this congregation is the Rev. Ernest G. Larson. The dedication was performed by Dr. T. O. Berntvedt, president of the LFC.

This congregation and its beautiful new church building are a telling example of what home mission work can accomplish in a large city.

Some twenty years ago, when the first steps were taken, this part of Minneapolis was largely an open space with plenty of room between the scattered residences. Members of an older congregation, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Slettenhaug, had moved out here and built a home. Mr. Slettenhaug was the first one to bring knowledge to the Board of Home Missions about the need of this district for a house of worship, and asked to have an investigation made. Pastor Anker Berg of the Olivet congregation was also notified. It so happened that Pastor Berg and the then secretary of the home mission met one day at the Slettenhaug home and decided to conduct a survey. The usual difficulties confronting a new work of this kind were not absent. A tent was rented, electric wiring obtained, an old organ was found at Augsburg and carried over (I wonder if it was ever returned), planks for seats were borrowed from a nearby lumber yard, and the two began evening services. Audiences of twelve to fifteen people gathered. A Sunday school was begun with six pupils. This kept on about six weeks. A permanent house was needed, and the Board of Home Missions built a small church, or chapel, on two lots it had purchased and paid for. A congregation was organized and regular work with services Sundays as well as weekdays established.

The work grew—with ups and downs as is usually the case. People became interested and assisted in the work.

A member of the congregation, Maurice Sand, a theological student at Augsburg, was the first settled pastor. Then Pastor Alfred Hansen served for a number of years. Until then the home mission had supported the work with loans from the Church Extension fund and subsidies. Then the congregation became self-supporting and began to pay off its debt to the mission. Pastor Hansen went into the navy as chaplain, and Rev. J. T. Quanbeck, Home Mission treasurer, served temporarily for three years. Thereupon the present pastor took charge, and plans for a new church structure were laid and carried out, and a new church now stands on the two lots with a seating capacity of 500 and a Sunday school of 475 pupils. The cost of the church is $140,000, not including a great deal of free labor furnished by members.

I mention this, not as anything unusual, because this is the way it is done in many a place, but to empha-

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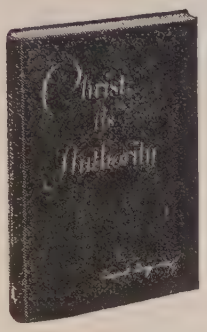

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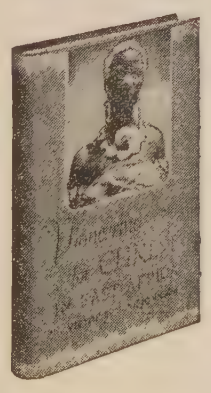

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size the importance of home missions in this land of ours.

Work on the new building on the Augsburg grounds is proceeding satisfactorily. The exceptionally favorable fall weather has greatly facilitated the work. The building is not expected to be ready for occupancy until late next summer. In the meantime there is a struggle to obtain room for classes and lodging for the record attendance, expected to be between 900 and 1,000 this school-year. This new science and library building will, completed, cost $482,000. Of this sum $340,000 is available. The rest is being gathered and prospects are good for the success of the drive.

Building of a new residence for the president of Augsburg is also in the plans. This, too, will be completed some time next summer.

Very successful and largely attended "home-comings" were held this fall both at Augsburg and at Oak Grove Seminary, Fargo. At Oak Grove two new teachers have been added to the staff. Five new teachers have recently been added to the Augsburg College staff, one of whom is Mr. Manivald Aldre, a D.P. from Esthonia (Baltic region) who will teach in the Chemistry Department. Mr. Aldre was assistant to the professor of Chemistry at Esthonian University of Technology 1941-42, and from 1942 he did research work until interrupted by the war. Before leaving for the United States he was acting director of the D.P. camp in which he was staying. Reverend Erling Tungseth, Spring Lake Park, Minneapolis, will teach Christianity.

Dr. Bernhard Christensen has returned from his trip to the Amsterdam conference and is giving the public the benefit of his experiences and observations in the form of lectures and articles in the papers. Although, as everybody would know, Dr. Christensen, as head of Augsburg College and Seminary, could not attend as a delegate-school units can not be members but only church bodies—it was nevertheless proper and very satisfactory that someone from the LFC could be present. He was recognized by the leaders and invited to special meetings and conferences during his stay in Europe.

President T. O. Burntvedt attended the recent meeting of the American Lutheran Conference at Detroit. The Conference adopted resolutions favoring formation of a Federation of all Lutheran Church bodies in America, to be effected by the National Lutheran Council.

The press reports statements by three of the church presidents from Minneapolis regarding the resolution, and I quote them here. Dr. Burntvedt said:

"The resolutions on Lutheran unity and union were born out of deep searching of hearts with keen awareness of divine urgency and compulsion placed upon pastors and laity by God."

Dr. J. A. Aasgaard said:

"The resolutions open up the possibility of the coming together of 5,000,000 Lutherans in America."

Dr. P. O. Bersell said:

"The move demonstrates the unanimous desire to effect organizational union with a minimum of delay."

The report further states that "the delegates voted to have their church bodies request the National Lutheran Council to form the new conference."

A very significant statement regarding another phase of the subject was made by Dr. O. P. Kretzman of the Missouri Synod, president of Valparaiso University. He is reported to have said:

"The unity action is 'a hint from God.' He also claimed the problem of Lutheranism today is undue 'organizationalism' of various bodies and undue 'intellectualizing' of theology."

It is particularly significant (so it seems to this writer) that a Missourian would deem "undue intellectualizing of theology" a hindrance to unity.

Two of our pastors have departed from this life recently: Pastor B. A. Borrevik, rector of the Ebenezer Old

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United Evangelical

By Paul Nyholm

Dedications — Reformation Sunday, October 31, 1948, will go down in the history of Dana College and Trinity Seminary, Blair, Nebraska, as the day when the new Administration and Library Building was dedicated. Designed in an adaptation of contemporary Scandinavian architecture and erected at a cost of $255,000, this building stands as a result of a jubilee drive in the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the school. The untiring leader of this drive was Dr. N. C. Carlsen, who now dedicated the beautiful building. In his address Dr. Carlsen quoted the late William S. Knudsen who once said to the speaker, "I believe in mass production of automobiles but not of men." Dana desires as a small Christian college to give personal attention to her students.

Two thousand people witnessed the dedication ceremony on this delightful Indian Summer Sunday.

The happiest man on the campus that day was probably President R. E. Morgon, who during the past year daily with watchful interest had inspected the building project.

Since May first ten new remodeled churches and two parsonages have been dedicated. Among the latest of the new churches are those in Des Moines, Iowa; Kansas City, Kansas; and Toronto, Canada. Several other new churches are being planned.

A new children's home has been erected at the Indian Mission at Oaks, Oklahoma.

Persons — Professors C. C. Madsen and Ethan Mengers were installed on November 3 as permanently elected professors at Trinity Seminary. Both previously served two years on a temporary basis.

Pastors Edwin Svendsen, formerly L.S.A. national president and then pastor at Washington Island, Wisconsin, and V. W. Bondo, former pastor at Toronto, Canada, were on October 3 installed as associate pastors to the Rev. C. A. Vammen, superintendent of the Indian Mission at Oaks, Oklahoma.

Pastor K. M. Matthiesen, Fremont, Nebraska, who for a number of years has been an efficient full time home mission secretary, has accepted a call to serve the Immanuel Lutheran Church at Minneapolis.

Pastor John Schultz, Fremont Bluffs Nebraska, has accepted a call to become a student pastor in Minot, North Dakota. He is the third pastor from the U.E.L.C. to enter L.S.A. service.

Foreign Missions — Lloyd Neve, a graduate of Trinity Seminary, son of Pastor A. V. Neve, was on December 5 commissioned as a missionary to Japan. He will in the near future leave for the Orient.

The Rev. Arnfeld Morck and wife and Miss Helena Danielson, Colombia, South America, have been the objects of stoning. The attacks were instigated by Roman Catholic priests.

As usual several congregations have gathered large harvest mission offerings. The congregation in Neola, Ia., bers, laid $2,500 on the altar.

Church Union—The Pacific District Convention fully favored a proposed plan of a joint convention of all N.L.C. churches this coming May.

which has only 215 confirmed mem-

At the Minnesota District convention the synodical secretary, the Rev. Theo. M. Hansen, made a strong plea for joining the Augustana Synod.

The Atlantic District convention discussed church union for several hours and resolved

That we go on record as not favoring Lutheran unity which comes as dictation of officialdom from above, but is not the expression of the will of the people; but that we favor the idea that where there are areas where the people are in favor of Lutheran Union or co-operation there synodical officials should allow immediate full expression of such ideas.

Wherever local conditions show that

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there is a need for consolidation and union of Lutheran churches of different synodical affiliation, there our synod and its officials should in the spirit of Christian love and cooperation seek to promote such needed consolidation.

Wherever the best interest of the Kingdom of God and the Lutheran Church would best be served by united efforts—be that in the fields of Christian charity, Christian Education, or Foreign Missions—there steps should be taken to bring about such needed cooperation and consolidation.

That more intersynodical meetings of lay people and pastors on local levels be held in the interest of promoting better understanding of one another and the promotion of cooperation.

A tour of Denmark, sponsored by the synod, is scheduled to leave from New York May 6, 1949.

The annual convention of synod will be held in Blair, Nebraska, during the month of June, 1949.

The Luther Leaguers are now busy selling *Christmas Chimes*, probably the oldest English Christmas annual in America. During the past four years 37,500 copies have been printed.

American Lutheran

By Arthur P. Michelfelder

ULCA Ready for Lutheran Union

There is no doubt about it, the United Lutheran Church is interested in union. Meeting for its biennial convention in Philadelphia at the same time the American Lutheran Church was meeting in Fremont, Ohio, the United Lutheran Church passed a resolution expressing willingness to consider organic union with all or any of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council. More than that, the ULCA is willing to adopt an entirely new constitution if that will lead to a closer unity among Lutherans in America.

Delegates to the convention instructed the Special Commission on Relations with American Lutheran Church Bodies to meet with similar commissions of other synods "to confer upon and negotiate organic union or steps leading thereto." The commission was also authorized to participate in drafting a constitution and in devising the organizational procedures that may seem wise in effecting such union.

At the same time the ULCA gave evidence that it is not interested in mass union for mere union's sake. It openly stated that it could not apply for membership in the proposed National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America because such membership would violate its evangelical principles. The proposed National Council of Churches is to include eight interdenominational bodies, among them the Federal Council of Churches. The ULCA pointed out that there is "little or no safeguard" in the constitution of the proposed council against including in its membership boards and agencies "whose evangelical character is not established."

Adopt Highest Budget in History

Naturally things other than union were also discussed at Philadelphia. The convention adopted the highest budget in the ULCA's history. Its 1948 budget was $2,750,000; its 1949 budget is set at $3,000,000. The convention voted to try to raise $4,830,900 in 1950 and $5,220,280 in 1951. During that same two-year period the church will be asked to raise $6,000,000 for its colleges and seminaries and possibly another $4,000,000 for Lutheran World Action.

Plans for a program of cooperative Lutheran evangelism in 1949 and 1950 were given "hearty endorsement," local congregations being urged to "make full use of the opportunity presented by the program to become more aggressive in winning the unchurched to

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Jesus Christ as Lord." This program is directed by the Lutheran Commission on Evangelism, made up of representatives of the eight church bodies participating in the National Lutheran Council.

Assails Secularism in Schools

A report presented by the ULCA's Board of Education assailed modern secularism as an ism which "denies God's place in the world and lives as though there were no moral and religious values." The board charged that many schools were more interested in scientific progress than in moral development and asserted that "students are required to study the teachings of Karl Marx, but no courses are offered in the teachings of Jesus." Today's secularism, the board continued, challenges the church "to purify her colleges and to proclaim the gospel of the Christian way of life, every day and in every department."

Protest Arrest of Ordass

The convention also called on Christians throughout the world to protest the arrest and imprisonment of Bishop Lajos Ordass, primate of the Lutheran Church of Hungary. All congregations were urged to "offer prayers unceasingly" in behalf of Bishop Ordass. The church further invited "all parts of Christendom to consider the far-reaching implications of this historic case and express their convictions in the matter with all vigor to appropriate representations in behalf of Bishop Ordass through every possible channel."

Presidents May Become Bishops

General presidents and district presidents of the ULCA may be called archbishops and bishops in the future. Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the ULCA, was asked to appoint a special commission to study the possibility of revising the titles of church officers "to make them conform more nearly to churchly and historical usage."

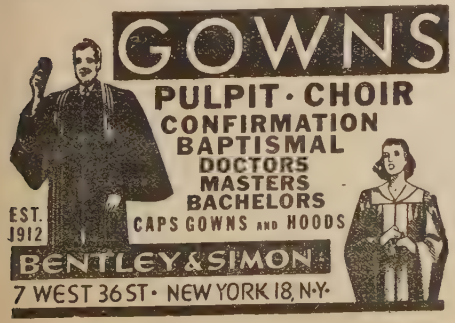
Dr. William F. Sunday, pastor of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in New York City, who introduced the resolution, stressed his conviction that the "church should be the church in its use of terminology to describe its functions." He said he favored use of the title "archbishop" for the president of the church with the presidents of synods to be known as "bishops."

—*Lutheran Standard.*

On the Religious Horizon

Hear Good Word About World Council

Both Mr. Ewald, of North Tonawanda, N. Y., and Dr. H. L. Yochum, of Columbus, Ohio, the two official delegates of our Church to the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches, brought encouraging word to the Awakened Convention about the possibilities of working, without compromise of our faith and principles, in this world-wide Christian agency. Readers of this paper already know that Lutherans played a prominent part in the organization of the World Council and found abundant opportunity at Amsterdam to bear telling witness to the full saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Readers also know that the Lutheran requirement that we take part in the World Council on a confessional basis (as a world Lutheran Church and not as component parts of the entire Protestant Church in the several nations of the world) was granted.



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In view of all these things the convention enthusiastically resolved, with what sounded like only three or four dissenting votes, to continue participation in the World Council of Churches and to make provision for our proper contribution to its budget. This contribution, for the present, will be about $2,000 annually.

Other actions dealing with Christian fellowship and cooperation included:

A resolution to make "every possible effort" to strengthen the bonds between the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia and the American Lutheran Church. Representatives of our Church who may be required to visit the Orient are urged to try to time their visits so that they may attend a meeting of the U.E.L.C.A. as official representatives of our Church.

A hearty resolution to continue our "active participation in and support of the Lutheran World Federation."

A cordial, sympathetic hearing given to Dr. Paul C. Empie, who spoke on the work of the National Lutheran Council and the approval, in principle, of the proposal to establish a Department of Radio within the National Lutheran Council.

A similar hearing given to Dr. C. P. Rasmussen, of Chicago, who heads the Commission on Evangelism of the National Lutheran Council church bodies, and to Dr. Conrad Hoyer, Chicago, executive secretary of the Division of American Missions of the National Lutheran Council. The Commission on Evangelism is not yet officially under the wing of the National Lutheran Council, and the 1949 budget of our Church includes a special item for the work of this commission.

Authorization of our thirteen districts to elect their own delegates to the conventions of the American Lutheran Conference henceforth so that these delegates may have more advance notice of their election.

—Lutheran Standard.

Need Lutherans Be Skeptics?

Organic Union is now possible between eight Lutheran denominations, but nobody is excited. The prospects for Lutheran union are better than they have been at any time since 1930, but even those who have done most to joggle sectarian vehicles out of their institutional ruts expect little or nothing to happen. The heirs of the tradition which made it impossible for modern Christianity to forget justification by faith confront the greatest challenge of the 20th century without faith and without justification on the most important issue before them.

Why are Lutherans so skeptical? Why did the recent biennial convention of the United Lutheran Church offer to unite with all or any of the other seven member denominations of the National Lutheran Council if it did not expect that something important would happen as a result of such an offer? Proposals and talk about unity which are not accompanied by faith and evangelical commitment resulting in reconciling deeds can backfire, as the history of the Disciples of Christ, to mention no others, bears evidence. What is involved here is not bad faith, but faith of any kind, good or bad.

I

Widespread observance of Reformation Sunday is only one of the numerous evidences that other Protestants are learning from their Lutheran neighbors. We welcome this development, but offer the observation that right relations require at least a minimum of understanding by others of what Lutherans mean when they discuss union with denominations of the same heritage. It would be unfortunate, to put it mildly, if the opinion became widespread that inter-Lutheran unity proposals or statements are only intended

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preserve an outmoded spiritual isolationism through the use of ecclesiastical double talk.

No explanation of Lutheran skepticism has much meaning unless it takes to account the present situation in at fellowship. There are now in this untry 16 denominations which take e name or accept the traditions of uther. All together they have a membership of 4,067,000. This community faith is polarized. The positive pole the National Lutheran Council, in hich eight denominations carry on an tensive cooperative program. The rgest of the N.L.C. denominations is e United Lutheran Church, which as 4,100 congregations and 1,886,000 embers. It has just held its biennial nvention, at which it not only held ut an olive branch to its associates in he N.L.C. but authorized its commison on relations with other American utheran churches to enter into unity egotiations and to "participate in rafting a constitution and in devising uch organizational procedure as may eem wise in effecting such a union."

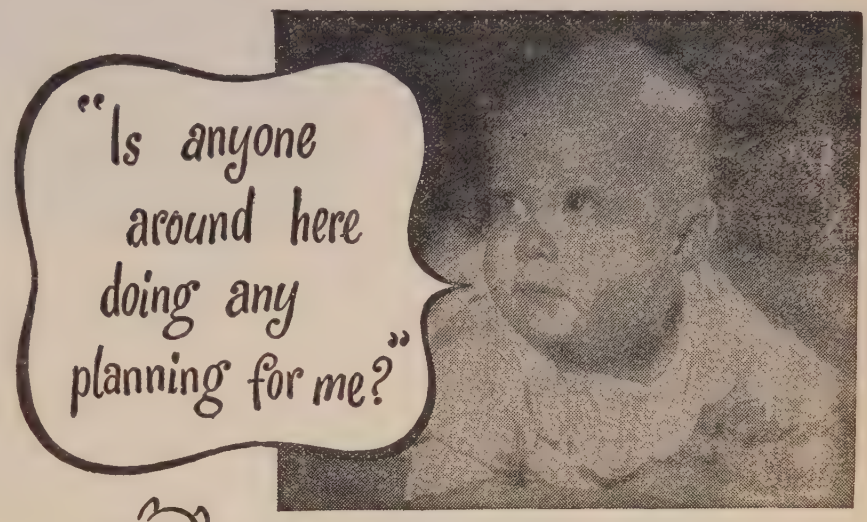
The negative pole of Lutheranism is he Synodical Conference. Its largest enomination is the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, which has 4,400 hurches and 1,576,000 members. It efuses to cooperate even with other utherans in the National Lutheran ouncil, and generally follows a line oward other Protestants which reminds one of Russia in the United Nations. Like Russia, it has organized ts satellite denominations, such as the Wisconsin Synod, into an alliance behind an effective ecclesiastical iron urtain of non-intercourse. None of he Synodical Conference churches are ikely to unite with others. Their poition however has a great influence n the National Lutheran Council denominations because in each group many church members lean toward Missouri.

II

Between these two groups stands an association known as the American Lutheran Conference, which will hold an important meeting in Detroit on November 11. This is a loose organization of five Lutheran churches, with these memberships: American Lutheran, 669,000; Augustana Evangelical, 427,000; Evangelical, 734,000; Lutheran Free, 55,000; and United Evangelical, 42,000. Together these denominations have more than 1,500 congregations and 1,827,000 members, If they could unite, they would constitute a body approximately the size of the United Lutheran Church or the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. Some Lutherans have decided that this union, which has a political parallel in the "Third Force" governments of France and "Western Union" in Europe, is the most desirable next step in Lutheran development. Last spring the small United Evangelical Lutheran Church formally proposed merger of the American Lutheran Conference denominations. It added that if this is not feasible, it is ready to unite with the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the larger denomination whose antecedents are principally Norwegian.

It is this situation which makes Lutherans skeptical of all talk of unity among themselves. Its complexity not only creates opportunity for endless political maneuvers, but makes such maneuvers inevitable. This is not to say that Lutherans are more likely to play church politics than Methodists or Southern Baptists, or that such contriving is necessarily evil in itself. But it is clear, to others if not to Lutherans, that such a constellation of separate denomination sovereignties sets up currents and counter-currents, attractions and repulsions, which are bound to exhaust the energies and tax the ingenuity of church leaders. In the end they wear themselves out without ever being able to rise to the position where they can feel they are serving the largest ends of Lutheranism, to say nothing of evangelical Christianity.

This point finds a perfect illustration in what happened when the Unit-



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ed Evangelical Lutheran Church proposed that the American Lutheran Conference churches unite. The Augustana Lutherans countered with the proposal that all the National Lutheran Council bodies merge. The American Lutheran Church sent word to the United Lutheran Church that it stood ready to consider its proposals, but it voted to approve union with the American Lutheran Conference bodies. The United Lutherans were leaning toward the Augustana proposal, but at Philadelphia last week offered to unite with any of the seven N.L.C. bodies. These are the United Lutheran Church, the five American Lutheran Conference bodies, the Danish and the Finnish Lutheran churches. The combined membership of the last two is around 50,000. It is typical of Lutheran skepticism that many now regard that United Lutheran offer as having been less a bid for unity than a move to prevent the organization of a third force denomination which would leave it out.

III

Lutheran skepticism concerning union arises naturally out of Lutheranism's heritage of sectarianism and out of a leadership which has reflected and exaggerated sectarian, cultural and sociological differences. But these things are transient, as the churches are recognizing by their attention to the question of church union. One of the most important forerunners of the new day is the National Lutheran Council. This remarkable inter-Lutheran agency is already carrying on many of the most important functions of a church uniting its eight constituent denominations. In public relations, radio, welfare and student work, American missions, Lutheran world action, work with prisoners of war and for orphaned missions it is doing for all more than the sum of individual efforts by single denominations could possibly equal. In 1947 it raised and spent over $5,700,000, of which over $4,800,000 went to Lutheran relief and rehabilitation throughout the world but particularly in Europe. Work together in the National Lutheran Council has already advanced its member churches a long way on the road to organic union.

But they still have a considerable distance to go, and covering that mileage is going to require forethought and resolution. Organic union of the N.L.C. denominations waits until some men are ready to stake their personal destinies and the future of their denominations on the faith that it is possible and necessary to achieve Lutheran unity in our time. Personal dedication and evangelical conviction are needed, as solid, determined and responsible as the Lutheran character can produce, as well as the wisdom of great churchmanship. Our acquaintance with Lutherans gives us confidence that sooner or later that kind of leadership will be raised up. But the burden of the remarks is that it is impossible to e aggerate the importance, for all oth Protestants as well as for Luthera that it be sooner.

—Christian Century

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